

**SURVEY OF ARMY FAMILIES II:  
NOVEMBER 1991**

**FINAL REPORT**

**Volume I  
A Multivariate Analysis  
of CONUS Results**

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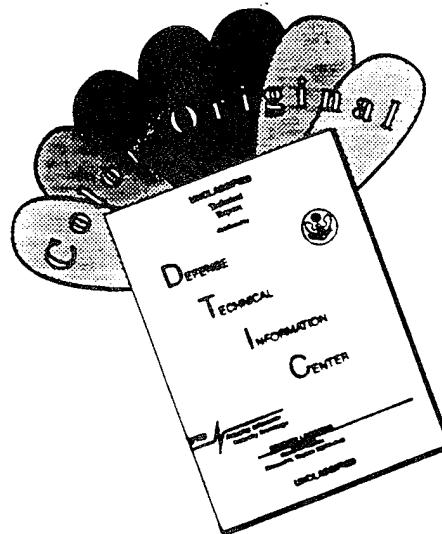
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**Volume I  
A Multivariate Analysis  
of CONUS Results**

**Prepared by**

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**August 1995**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents an analysis of the Survey of Army Families, 1991. It is based only on respondents residing CONUS, Hawaii, Alaska, Korea, and Panama; the data on spouses living in Europe are analyzed in a separate report. The number of respondents in this sample is approximately 3,000, consisting of civilian spouses of active duty soldiers. This sample has been weighted in the analysis to reflect the actual rank structure of the Army. The survey covers a variety of topics: Operation Desert Storm (ODS) experience, personal background, housing, transportation, relocation, Army family programs and services, health care, child care, schools, employment, perceptions of the Army and its leadership, and attitudes toward downsizing and retention. The analysis focuses on the contribution of various factors to the respondent's overall satisfaction with Army life, i.e., the evaluation of the quality of life in the Army.

### **Demographics**

The respondents are overwhelmingly female (97%); three-quarters are white, 18% Black and 9% Hispanic. The great majority have finished high school or attended college (76%), and most fall into the 23-40 age category; 80% of the weighted sample are spouses of enlisted soldiers, with the largest group in the senior enlisted ranks.

### **Quality of Life**

Most spouses are satisfied with the way of life in the Army (about two-thirds). Perceptions of Army support of families has a strong impact on feelings about the quality of life in the military. Respondents tend to have more positive perceptions of unit leaders than of leaders at higher levels. Feelings about the Army as a career are very much influenced by the evaluation of quality of life; about two-thirds of the spouses would like the soldier to make the Army a career.

### **Health Care**

Medical care makes a strong contribution to overall satisfaction with Army life, i.e., those who are satisfied with medical care tend to feel positive about Army life in general. The majority (about three-fifths) are satisfied with medical care but substantial groups feel negative about certain aspects of it, e.g., waiting times, specialty care, and availability of information on the phone. Dental care shows lower rates of satisfaction but also has less impact on overall feelings about the Army.

## Housing and Relocation

Most spouses describe at least one Permanent Change of Station (PCS) in the last few years; however, the number of moves bears no relation to their evaluation of quality of life in the Army. The majority have not used most relocation services but, among those who have, satisfaction is associated with quality of life. Housing satisfaction has a moderate association with overall satisfaction. Homeowners are much more likely to be satisfied with their housing than those occupying any other type of residence.

## Army Programs and Services

The major finding here is that only a few programs are used by most respondents. Only small minorities use any Army Community Service (ACS) programs. Recreation facilities show greater patronage, but only in a few cases such as the library and post movie theater, does the majority use them. However, nearly everyone uses the commissary and the Post Exchange (PX); most are satisfied with these services. Moreover, satisfaction with the commissary and PX is related to other attitudes such as perception of Army concern and support for families.

## Spouse Employment

Nearly half of the respondents are employed, mostly in traditional "female" occupations such as clerical jobs and teaching. Employment status per se is unrelated to overall satisfaction. However, aspirations combined with status does affect overall attitudes; i.e., spouses who are not employed but want to work are more dissatisfied than either the employed or non-workers who have no desire to work. In terms of job seeking, most respondents tend to use informal sources such as friends rather than the Civilian Personnel Office or other agencies. Only a small minority of spouses engage in volunteer or unpaid work either in military or civilian organizations (approximately 10%).

## Children and Youth

Most respondents have children, many of them of pre-school age. About four-fifths of these respondents use some form of child care; the most popular types of child care are neighbors and baby sitters. Child care centers both on and off post are used less. Parents stress the need for drop-in care and tend to be dissatisfied with the Army's provision for it. Satisfaction with child care has a powerful effect on perceptions of Army family support. With regard to schools, most respondents report satisfaction, no matter which type of school is attended. Private and parochial schools elicit highest satisfaction, on-post public schools the least, but differences are not great.

### Stress and Problems

The majority of spouses (74%) feel informed and comfortable dealing with Army agencies and personnel. They are most likely to feel negative about Army civilian employees; over one-third report that civilian workers do not treat family members with respect.

Military life does produce certain stresses due to Army demands, absence of spouse, possibility of combat, etc., but most spouses feel they can cope with them. At present, the possibility of involuntary separation is the most frequently cited source of stress. With regard to general life domain problems, most respondents report a low frequency; 60% cite one or two problems and only 8% report more than four. The most frequent problem involves financial difficulties. On a depressive affect score, over four-fifths of the spouses show low depression and only 7% reflect serious depression. Both life domain problems and military-life stressors contribute to depression and to dissatisfaction with the Army way of life. Moreover, problems and stress largely account for the observed correlation between depression and overall satisfaction.

### Retention

About two-thirds of the respondents want the soldier to make the Army a career while very few (6%) would like the soldier to leave before completing the present obligation. Spouses tend to attribute similar attitudes to the soldier. Satisfaction with the Army way of life bears a powerful relationship to career aspirations; perceptions of support, military stressors, and feelings about Army-family interaction also affect career attitudes. Specific programs and services and general affect and problems have only a modest effect on career aspirations. The major reasons for remaining in the Army relate to economic and entitlement factors; security, retirement pay and benefits, and medical care are the three factors mentioned most frequently. Satisfaction with the soldier's Army job is the only non-economic factor cited frequently as the major reason for remaining in the Army.

### Rank

Soldier rank is associated with a number of factors: age and education of spouse, years of service and of marriage. Higher rank also shows a positive, but modest, relationship to attitudes toward the military: Overall satisfaction, Army family support, and Army-family interaction.

Stress, adjustment during and after deployment, and depression are related to rank: lower rank spouses manifest somewhat higher stress and depression and tended to adjust less effectively both during and after deployment but, again, these associations are not strong. Most spouses, whatever the rank, adjust well and

show positive affect. On a composite score measuring total adjustment, the major variation is among junior enlisted spouses who are less well adjusted than any other rank category.

With regard to specific factors, rank has little or no effect on evaluations of medical or dental care. Junior enlisted spouses are most likely to be unemployed (i.e., not working but desire to work). However, the majority of spouses, irrespective of rank, are satisfied with their jobs. Housing satisfaction is greater among officers, the group most likely to be homeowners.

Utilization of Army services and facilities reveals a variety of patterns with regard to rank. Some show no variation (e.g., commissary, PX, Chaplain's Family Life Center and social work).

Other programs are used less frequently by higher ranks:

relocation services, financial assistance, and a number of support services. In a few cases (e.g., Chaplain), usage increases with rank. Finally, all recreation and sports programs show similar patterns of use - the highest patronage for each of these programs is among senior enlisted spouses (E5-E9).

A favorable attitude toward the Army as a career rises sharply between junior and senior enlisted spouses, decreases for junior officers, and grows stronger among senior officers' spouses. Of course, this is related to seniority as the senior ranks have invested more time in the Army and are closer to retirement.

With regard to involuntary separation, the senior enlisted ranks are most likely to consider this a serious problem.

## INTRODUCTION

The 1991 Survey of Army Families (SAF II) is part of a continuing program of research relating both to soldiers and their spouses. It is a direct follow-up to the first Survey of Army Families conducted in 1987 (SAF I). In both studies (SAF I and SAF II) the Army surveyed a sample of spouses of active duty soldiers throughout the world. Spouses surveyed were women and men who were not themselves on active duty in the military, and who were married to a soldier on active duty.

The primary objective of the 1987 survey (SAF I) was to assess the status of the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) and other efforts to improve the quality of life for Army families. The survey also provided spouses an opportunity to express their views so these could be heard and responded to by Army leadership.

The primary objectives of the 1991 survey (SAF II) were to assess the impact of Operations Desert Shield/Storm (ODS/S) on Army families; assess the use and satisfaction for select quality of life programs and services; track changes in Army families with soldier and civilian spouse; and track Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) progress and concerns.

Several diverse kinds of families are included within the broad category of soldier-civilian spouse families. These include families at different stages of the soldier career and family life, from Specialists 4 and below through senior enlisted and officer pay grades. They include ones who do not have dependent children, as well as ones with children ranging in age from infants to young adults. Moreover, they include families in which the spouse works - in paid employment or as a volunteer (or does both) as well as ones in which the spouse chooses not to work in a paid job and ones in which the spouse wants or needs to work but is unable to find employment.

## THE 1991 SURVEY OF ARMY FAMILIES:

The 1991 survey (SAF II), the subject of this report, took a second look at the following areas from the 1987 survey (SAF I):

- Support and concern for families
  - Satisfaction with Army life
  - Adapting to Army way of life
- Children, child care and schools
  - Volunteer work
  - Spouse employment
  - Transportation
  - Housing
- Career plans (retention)
- Reasons for staying in the Army
  - Civilian spouse demographics
  - Soldier spouse demographics

In addition, the 1991 survey also took a first look at the following areas of concern:

- Family Support Groups
- Ratings of CFSC programs/services
  - Aspects of medical care
- Knowledge of Army documents and procedures
  - Dealing with Army agencies
- Child-bearing during 22-month period (before, during, after ODS)
  - Quality of marriage
- Problems in family in last six months
  - Individual well-being

The U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center (CFSC) and the Army Personnel Survey Office conducted the survey of civilian spouses of active duty soldiers in the late fall and winter of 1991-1992.

### Sample

Questionnaires were mailed to a sample of over 8,000 civilian spouses of active duty soldiers, stratified by rank, and residing in CONUS, Alaska/Hawaii, Korea, and Panama. This sample constituted about 4% of the total number of soldiers married to civilian spouses. The response rate for the survey was 37%, resulting in 3,006 usable questionnaires. Since junior enlisted personnel were underrepresented in the final sample, it was weighted to reflect the number of civilian spouses of soldiers at each rank in the U.S. Army; the weighted total consists of 306,798 spouses.

The question of possible bias in responses arises because of the underrepresentation of junior enlisted spouses. However, it is not at all clear whether the bias would be in the direction of positive or negative responses. A case could be made for either direction. While we might assume that spouses who dislike the

Army would tend not to complete the questionnaire, the reverse might be true. Dissatisfied respondents might welcome the opportunity to express their complaints; this is certainly the case with respect to volunteered comments. Therefore, we are assuming a reasonably representative sample of junior enlisted soldiers' spouses.

A supplementary sample was drawn for the forces in Europe and included an additional group of questions relevant to OCONUS. These data are not included in the following report. At a later time, the two sets of data will be compared and integrated.

### Survey Topics

The survey is extensive, covering many of the same topics as the 1987 survey: personal background factors of both soldier and respondent (i.e., spouse); housing and transportation; family relocation; Army family programs and services (e.g., Army Community Service, recreational programs); health care; childcare and schools; work experience; the Army way of life (e.g., perception of Army attitudes to family, interaction with Army agencies, evaluation of leaders); attitudes toward the Army as a career for soldier; stress, problems, and depression.

New material, including a substantial section relating to Operation Desert Shield/Storm (ODS), was added to examine deployment experience, coping during deployment, reunion issues, sources of information and sources of support during ODS. In addition, a group of items focusing on Family Support Groups before, during, and after ODS and several questions relating to personnel reductions in the Army (downsizing) were included in the 1991 questionnaire.

A comment sheet attached to the questionnaire allowed respondents to volunteer opinions, information, etc. not covered in the survey. These are described in a separate report.

### Analysis

The description and analysis of the results of the survey are based on the weighted sample of the data in the continental United States, Alaska/Hawaii, Korea and Panama.

Appendix A presents the entire questionnaire including percentage frequencies for each item. Each section of the analysis cites by question number the specific items discussed in that section.

A Glossary (Appendix B) following this report defines the statistical and methodological terms used in the analysis.

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

In this section, we will provide a brief description of the respondents in terms of a series of demographic factors, relating either to themselves or to the soldier spouse.

The sample of respondents in this survey is overwhelmingly female - 97% are women and only 3% are men. This is not surprising as the sample was limited to civilian spouses only, eliminating dual career couples. (Appendix A: Q. 45)

About three-quarters of the spouses are white, 18% Black, and the remainder either native American, Asian or Pacific Islanders. Nine per cent describe themselves as of Hispanic origin (irrespective of race). For a minority (14%), English was not their first language, but of these, the majority (about three-quarters) do not find language a problem in obtaining Army services. (Appendix A: Q. 46, 47, 48, 49)

In terms of rank of soldier, the weighted sample shows the following: (Appendix A: Q. 34)

TABLE 1. RANKS OF SOLDIERS

<u>Rank</u>		<u>Frequency</u>
E1 - E4	(PV1-CPL/SPC)	30%
E5 - E9	(SGT-SGM/CSM)	50
WO1 - CW4	(Warrant Officer)	3
O1 - O3	(2LT, 1LT, CPT)	9
O4 - O6	(MAJ, LTC, COL)	8

The age distribution of respondents is presented below:  
(Appendix A: Q. 51)

TABLE 2. AGES OF SPOUSES

<u>Age</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
22 and under	18%
23 - 30	39
31 - 40	34
41 and over	9

The majority fall into the category of mature adults (23-40). As might be expected from the age distribution, almost half of the spouses have been married between three and ten years, and an additional 25% between eleven and 20 years. About 10% which are

married less than three years and only 4% more than twenty years. The great majority (80%) have dependent children; of these, most have one or two children, 17% have three children, and only 7% have 4 or more children. Appendix A. Q. 54, 82A1, 83)

Most of the respondents have either finished high school (41%) or attended college (35%); only 6% have less than a high school education while 18% have either completed college or had graduate training. (Appendix A: Q. 50)

Finally, the survey includes data on military background of the spouses with the following results. (Appendix A: Q. 57)

TABLE 3. MILITARY BACKGROUND OF SPOUSES

<u>Military Background</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
No	53%
Served on Active Duty	15
Served/serving with National Guard /Reserves	4
Parent(s) in military service	18
Previously married to military service member	8
Worked/working a civilian for US Armed Force	17

Over half of the respondents had no previous experience with the military. However, substantial groups had earlier experience: either personal (19% on active duty or in reserves); 26% are either children of military parents or were previously married to military member; finally, 17% have worked for the military.

The survey also includes information on the background of the soldier in terms of education, ethnicity, and years of service. Education is very similar to that of spouses with one exception -all of the soldiers have at least a high school diploma since the Army generally recruits soldiers with a high school diploma or its equivalent. Ethnic distribution is also similar to that of spouses with about three-quarters white and 21% Black; eight per cent describe themselves as Hispanic. (Appendix A: Q. 36, 37, 38)

Finally, data on years of service in the military reveals that 16% have served less than two years, 32% between three and ten years, and 36% between 11 and 20 years; only 5% have over 20 years of service. These figures are consistent with the age distribution among spouses. (Appendix A: Q. 35)

## QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE ARMY: Spouses' General Attitudes

The Survey of Army Families, 1991 (hereafter referred to as SAF) includes a number of questions relating to spouses' attitudes toward the Army and military life, their perceptions of the Army's attitudes toward families and of Army support of families, and their feelings about making the Army a career. The questionnaire includes two items relating to the quality of life in the Army. Respondents were asked: Appendix A: Q. 106A4, 114) How satisfied are you with the kind of life you can have in the Army?

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Army as a way of life?

Responses include five categories ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied; the results are shown below.

TABLE 4. SATISFACTION WITH ARMY LIFE

	<u>Very satis/Neutral</u>	<u>Dissat/</u>	<u>very dissat</u>
	<u>satisfied</u>		
Kind of life you can have	62%	24%	13%
Army way of life	63	23	15

It is apparent that the distribution of responses on both questions is almost identical: close to two-thirds of the spouses are either very satisfied or satisfied with Army life, about one-quarter are neutral (indicating probably mixed or uncertain attitudes), and only small percentages are dissatisfied. These two questions apparently tap the same issue using somewhat different wording; their similar results represent a test for reliability. Additional evidence of this is the fact that the correlation between the two items is so high as to indicate a tautology ( $r=.74$ ). We are also interested in observing the respondents' perceptions of Army concern and support for families. There is considerable material on the perceptions of different levels of leadership and of the overall Army organization. Again, the responses include five categories ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. The final item in the table below measures opinion about making the Army a career, a variable that we would expect to bear some relationship to perceptions of concern and support for families as well as to the perceived quality of life in the Army. (Appendix A: Q. 106A1-A3, 110A1-A3, 113)

TABLE 5. SATISFACTION WITH ARMY SUPPORT AND ARMY CAREER

	<u>Very sat/Neutral/Dissat/</u>	<u>satisfied</u>	<u>very dis</u>
How satisfied are you with....			
Respect Army shows spouses	36%	31%	33%
Support and concern the Army has for your family	35	38	28
Concern spouses unit has for families	34	29	37
Support/concern for your family by* Leaders in high positions	25	46	29
Officers in spouse's unit	37	32	31
NCOs in spouse's unit	40	34	26
Spouse (i.e., soldier)			
Making Army a career	71	19	10

It is apparent that with regard to concern/support by the Army, by leaders in high positions, and by unit leaders as well as respect for spouses, most of the results are very similar. The one divergence is with regard to leaders in high positions, perceived as supportive by only one-quarter, compared to 34-40% for other leaders and for the Army as a whole. However, nearly half of the respondents are neutral with regard to high position leaders, possibly reflecting lack of contact and unfamiliarity, rather than dissatisfaction. All of the data concerning the unit are very similar, suggesting that there is a unit climate which affects perceptions of officers and NCOs as well as the unit as a whole. Finally we see that a substantial majority (over two-thirds) take a positive view of the soldier making the Army a career. This is a considerably larger proportion than those who are satisfied with respect, concern, and support at various levels, indicating that there are factors other than perceptions of Army attitudes to family (e.g., economic issues) which contribute to career decisions. Another group of questions relates more specifically to family climate within the unit. Respondents were asked to what extent the following apply to the soldier's place of duty.

(Appendix A: Q. 111A1-A3)

\*These figures eliminate a "does not apply" category; thus percentages are larger than if that category were included.

TABLE 6.

FAMILY CLIMATE WITHIN THE UNIT

	Extent: <u>Very great/Moderate/Slight/</u> <u>great</u>	<u>not at all</u>
Leaders of unit encourage unit-wide family activity	17%	26 57
Leaders of unit know about family programs	24	32 44
During ODS, leaders of unit were concerned about welfare of soldiers' families	30	29 41

It is clear that only a minority of unit leaders place great emphasis on family programs and activities. However, during ODS, most respondents perceived unit leaders as at least moderately concerned with families' welfare; it is this recent experience that may partially account for the favorable view of unit leaders cited earlier.

We can look at the interrelationships among these variables by examining their intercorrelations. The matrix below presents the correlations for three factors: Quality of life items (way of life, kind of life you can have in the Army), and how you would feel if spouse made the Army a career. These can be considered "outcomes," based on many factors such as perceptions of support and concern, demographic, structural and personal factors, etc. These will be analyzed in later sections.

TABLE 7. CORRELATION BETWEEN ARMY CAREER AND WAY OF LIFE

	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>		
	Career	Way of life	Kind of life
Army as a career	--	.67	.73
Army as a way of life	.67	--	.74
Kind of life in Army	.73	.74	--

These three variables are strongly interrelated. We suggested earlier that "Army way of life" and "kind of life you can have in the Army" are really asking the same thing, i.e., what is the quality of life in the Army. However, feelings about making the Army a career are clearly distinct; yet their correlation with quality of life is extremely strong. Obviously, quality of life is an important factor in career decisions and thus merits further analysis.

In the section below, we examine the correlations between quality of life and nine items relating to concern and support for families and spouses. We are using "the Army as a way of life" as the single and best indicator of overall quality of life. These nine items dealing with support/concern for families on different levels as well as unit family activity are combined into a single score called "Family support" which is a summary of the respondents' perceptions of the Army and of leaders' attitudes toward families.

TABLE 8. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN FAMILY SUPPORT  
AND ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>
Respect Army shows wives	.46
Concern Army has for families	.62
Concern unit has for families	.41
Concern of leaders in high places	.42
Concern of unit officers	.39
Concern of unit NCOs	.32
Unit leaders encourage family activities	.27
Unit leaders know family programs	.27
During ODS, unit leaders were concerned about family welfare	.32
Family Support Score	.51

All of these correlation coefficients are statistically significant but some are more striking than others. Perception of concern for families on the Army level, as compared with the unit level, clearly has the strongest impact on satisfaction with quality of life ( $r=.62$  and  $.41$ , respectively). Within the unit, family activities, knowledge of family programs, and support during ODS all have a moderate effect on quality of life satisfaction. However, if we combine all the items into a score, the correlation coefficient is very strong,  $r=.51$ .

As described earlier this score is based on the nine items relating to support, concern, respect listed above. The responses are scored from 1 for "very dissatisfied" or "not at all" through 5 for "very satisfied" or "very great extent" in the case of unit family programs. Thus scores range from 9 through 45, a low score indicating a negative perception, a high score a positive view of concern and support. If we divide scores into four equal categories, we find the following distribution.

TABLE 9.

SATISFACTION WITH FAMILY SUPPORT

Family Support ScoreFrequency

Satisfied; positive	(36-45)	11%
Moderately positive	(27-35)	37
Moderately negative	(12-26)	36
Dissatisfied; negative	( 9-17)	16

Most of the cases (about three-quarters) fall into the two middle categories. In general, the respondents divide fairly evenly with 52% in the negative half and 48% on the satisfied side, showing a slight skew toward dissatisfaction.

The correlation between satisfaction with the Army as a way of life and the Family Support score is very strong ( $r=.51$ ). The following table shows this relationship in terms of categories - for each category of the support score, we see the percentage who are satisfied or dissatisfied with the Army as a way of life.

TABLE 10.

FAMILY SUPPORT AND ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army Way of Life</u>	<u>Family Support Score</u>			
	<u>High (Pos)</u>	<u>Mod.Hi (Mod Pos)</u>	<u>Mod.Low (Neg)</u>	<u>Low (Neg)</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	92%	79%	54%	25%
Neutral	6	16	27	40
Dissatisfied/ very dissatisfied	1	5	20	35

It is apparent that perceptions of family support are very closely related to satisfaction with Army life. Among those with a very positive perception, almost all (92%) are satisfied with the Army as a way of life compared to 25% of those with a highly negative perception. Conversely 35% who feel negative about support are dissatisfied with Army life compared to only 1% of the satisfied.

Earlier we observed powerful correlations between attitudes toward making the Army a career and satisfaction with quality of life, measured either through "Army as a way of life" or "kind of life you can have in the Army";  $r's = .67$  and  $.73$ , respectively. The subject of concern/support for families also shows a strong association with attitudes toward making the Army a career. For

individual items bearing on family support, correlations with Army career range from .26 for NCO concern to .42 for Army concern. The correlation between Army as a career and the family support score is .40, reflecting a relatively strong relationship.

The data in this section can be summarized as follows:

1. Overall, nearly two-thirds of the sample are satisfied with the quality of life in the Army, measured through two different questions.
2. In terms of concern and support for Army families, perceptions are fairly consistent with one-third to two-fifths of the spouses feeling positive about Army support. Respondents are somewhat less positive about leaders in high posts than about unit leaders and the Army as a whole.
3. These perceptions have a strong impact on feelings about the Army as a way of life. A family support score combining perceptions of all levels of the Army is strongly related to feelings about the Army way of life.
4. Attitudes toward making the Army a career are very much influenced by evaluation of quality of life and are also related to perceptions of concern for the family. It is noteworthy that somewhat over two-thirds want the soldier to make the Army a career, a percentage very similar to the nearly two-thirds who are satisfied with the Army as a way of life. This suggests that quality of life for spouse and family is an important issue in retention.
5. These results indicate that there is a constellation of interrelated attitudes among spouses bearing on perceptions of Army concern, respect and support for families, quality of life in the Army, and feelings about retention.

## RELATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO SATISFACTION WITH ARMY LIFE

We noted earlier that over 60% of the spouses are either satisfied or very satisfied with the Army as a way of life or with the kind of life you can have in the Army. Many different factors may contribute to overall satisfaction: Demographic characteristics, personal attributes, and satisfaction with various life domains. The table below shows the correlation between overall satisfaction (the Army as a way of life) and several factors: age, number of dependent children living at home, employment status, number of PCS moves in last three years, and satisfaction with housing, medical care, dental care, and ACS services. The letters "ns" indicate that the correlation is not statistically significant. The correlations are arranged in descending order of magnitude.

TABLE 11. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHICS AND SPECIFIC PROGRAMS  
AND ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>
Satisfaction with quality medical care	.33
Satisfaction with ACS	.27
Satisfaction with dental care	.24
Satisfaction with housing	.22
Age	.21
Employment status	-.07 ns
Number of PCS moves	.05 ns
Number of children at home	.02 ns

Except for age, none of the demographic variables (number of children at home, PCS moves, employment status) shows any relationship with overall satisfaction with the Army way of life. Age has a positive correlation with satisfaction, i.e., the older the spouse, the more likely she is to be satisfied. This result is completely consistent with the 1987 survey which indicated a similar correlation with age and with age-related variables such as length of marriage. Similarly, both in 1987 and 1991, employment status had no effect on satisfaction unless we take into account aspiration, whether the non-working spouse was looking for work or was out of the labor force. The factors related to Army services and programs of life do show a relationship with overall satisfaction. Medical care has the

greatest impact followed by satisfaction with Army Community Services, dental care, and housing. The number of PCS moves has no significant effect; again, this is consistent with the results of the 1987 survey.

### MEDICAL CARE

We observed in the previous section that quality of medical care has a relatively important impact on overall satisfaction with the Army way of life ( $r=.33$ ). This was also true in the 1987 survey; moreover, in the volunteered comments both in '87 and '91, medical care was the single area cited most often, usually in a critical manner.

The table below presents a) the proportion of spouses who have not used the service or indicate that it was not available and b) among those who have used the service, the level of satisfaction. The data show attitudes both toward overall quality and availability of medical care and toward specific aspects of medical care. The data refer to medical care within the last two years.

(Appendix A: Q. 77A1, 77A2, 78A1-A17)

TABLE 12. ARMY MEDICAL CARE: USE AND SATISFACTION

	<u>(a) Have not used/unavail.</u>	<u>(b) Have Used</u>	<u>Very satis/</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Dissat.</u>
Quality of medical care	7%	61%	12%	25%	
Availability	6	50	16	34	
Exams/diagnosis	6	58	17	25	
Treatment	6	57	19	24	
Advice to stay healthy	12	46	33	22	
Time to get appointment	5	40	17	43	
Time waiting to see Dr.	5	33	18	49	
Time for pharmacy to fill prescriptions	6	41	18	41	
Time with Dr. and staff	5	51	23	26	
Availability of information on phone	17	29	23	48	
Availability of med. records	8	69	19	12	
Hours of operation	7	65	21	13	
Access to care in emergency	17	55	18	27	
Access to specialty care	28	38	20	42	
Attitude of doctor	5	55	22	23	
Attitude of support staff	5	52	25	23	
Attitude of office staff	5	47	28	25	
Channels to file complaints	51	39	35	26	
CHAMPUS	30	62	15	23	

These results indicate that most spouses have used medical services in the last two years; usually about 7% have not used a particular component of medical care. However, certain special services show substantially greater non-use e.g., phone advice, emergency care, specialty care, CHAMPUS and, most of all, official complaints. Overall, about three-fifths are either satisfied or very satisfied and one-quarter are dissatisfied with

the quality of medical care. With regard to availability, satisfaction is lower - half are satisfied while about one-third are dissatisfied. Observing specific components of medical care, we find that the majority are satisfied with the thoroughness of examinations and treatment (58% and 57%, respectively); amount of time with the doctor (51%); access to care in emergency (55%); attitudes of doctors and of support staff (55% and 52%, respectively); availability of records (69%); and hours of operation (65%). On the other hand, relatively large groups are dissatisfied with availability of information on the phone (48%); access to specialty care (42%); time waiting to see the doctor (49%); time for pharmacy to fill prescriptions (41%); and availability of medical care (34%).

These data relate both to overall satisfaction with quality of medical care and to a number of very specific aspects or dimensions of medical care and service. The table below shows the correlations between satisfaction with each specific component of medical care and with overall quality of medical care. The correlations are presented in order of magnitude; all are statistically significant.

TABLE 13. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SATISFACTION WITH MEDICAL CARE COMPONENTS AND OVERALL QUALITY

<u>Component</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>
Thoroughness of treatment	.68
Thoroughness of exam and accuracy of diagnosis	.64
Availability	.64
Attitude of doctors serving you	.57
Access to specialty care	.56
Attitude of medical support staff	.54
Time with doctors and staff	.54
Attitude of office staff	.51
Official channels for filing complaints	.50
Time waiting to see Dr. or staff	.49
Time between call for appointment & being seen by staff	.48
Availability of medical information or advice by phone	.46
Access to medical care in emergency	.43
Hours of operation	.42
Availability of medical records	.41
CHAMPUS	.31
Time for pharmacy to fill prescriptions	.23

These results are generally not surprising. Medical considerations such as thoroughness of treatment and examination, accuracy of diagnosis and availability of Army medical care all show very strong relationships with evaluation of overall quality. Essentially, these factors can be perceived as the core components of medical care. However, attitudes of doctors, support medical staff, and office staff are also strongly related to assessments of quality, followed by waiting time between call and actual appointment as well as waiting time to see doctor or staff after an appointment is made. The importance of staff

attitudes was also observed in the 1987 survey, both in the quantitative analysis and, even more dramatically, in the volunteered comments. We can also construct a score based on the components of medical care listed above. This will provide a summary of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with all the aspects of medical care included in the survey. We are omitting CHAMPUS from this score, since it refers to financial factors rather than quality of medical care. To develop the score, we assign values from 1 for very dissatisfied through 5 for very satisfied; thus, for the sixteen items, scores can range from a low of 16 to a high of 80. A high score indicates satisfaction, a low score, dissatisfaction with the components of medical care. The distribution of scores is shown in the table below.

TABLE 14. SATISFACTION WITH COMPONENTS OF MEDICAL CARE

<u>Medical Components Score</u>		<u>Frequency</u>
Very satisfied	(64-80)	16%
Satisfied	(48-63)	43
Dissatisfied	(32-47)	31
Very dissatisfied	(16-31)	9

If we divide the scores into four equal categories, the majority of respondents are in the satisfied range. A total of 59% are either very satisfied or satisfied compared to 40% who are dissatisfied with the sixteen components of medical care. The median score is approximately 50, again indicating a tilt toward satisfaction.

We observed earlier that these aspects of medical care all relate to the evaluation of the quality of medical care. The correlation between the additive scores and overall evaluation of medical care is even stronger than for any single component -  $r=.71$ , a result that is not unexpected. The strength of this correlation does suggest that "quality of medical care" is, to a great extent, made up of these sixteen components.

The importance of medical care is also reflected in the following results. The correlation between the medical components score and satisfaction with the Army as a way of life is .40, indicating a fairly strong relationship. We can examine this relationship more closely in the following table, showing the proportion of respondents satisfied/dissatisfied with the Army as a way of life for each category of the medical components score.

TABLE 15. SATISFACTION WITH COMPONENTS OF MEDICAL CARE AND THE ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army Way of Life</u>	<u>Components of Medical Care Score</u>			
	<u>Very Satis</u>	<u>Satis</u>	<u>Dissatis</u>	<u>Very dissat</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	82%	74%	50%	31%
Neutral	14	17	31	27
Dissatisfied/ very dissatis.	4	10	19	42

There is a clear linear relationship between satisfaction with medical components and overall satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. The percentage satisfied with the way of life declines as satisfaction with medical components declines (82% to 31%); the reverse is true with regard to dissatisfaction which shows an increase from 4% to 42% as dissatisfaction with medical components rises.

These data relating to satisfaction with medical care are important because medical care has a more significant impact on general satisfaction with the Army way of life than almost any other program or service. Moreover, certain components of medical care elicit considerable dissatisfaction among users (e.g., time waiting to see doctors and to get an appointment). To the extent that medical services can be changed, these data indicate where improvement is most needed.

#### DENTAL CARE

The 1991 Survey of Army Families includes only three items relating to Dental care and services; the questions ask a) If the respondent has used the service; b) How satisfied she was with its quality and availability; c) How satisfied she was with the Delta Dental Program. (Appendix A: Q. 77B1, 77B2, 79, 80)

Table: 16. DENTAL CARE: USE AND SATISFACTION

a) Have not Have used used/unavail. Very  
satis/NeutralDissat/satisfiedvery dis.

Quality of Dental care & services	31%	52%	12%	36%
Availability	22	30	12	58
Delta Dental Program	59	49	16	34

We can see that far fewer spouses use the Army dental program than use the medical services. The Delta Dental Program is an insurance program for dependents similar to CHAMPUS. Less than half of the respondents use it but, among those who do, nearly half are satisfied or very satisfied. Relatively large groups have not used Army dental services in the last two years (31% and 22% on the first two questions) compared to medical services. Availability seems to be a much greater problem with dental than with medical services. Only 30% of the respondents who have used dental services are satisfied with their availability compared to 50% satisfied with the availability of medical services. We observed earlier that satisfaction with the quality of Army dental care has a moderate association with feelings about the Army as a way of life ( $r=.24$ ). We find a very strong association between assessment of quality and availability ( $r=.66$ ) and a smaller, but significant, association between satisfaction with quality and satisfaction with the Delta plan ( $r=.44$ ). Of course, we should point out that only a minority uses the Delta plan; this may be due to dissatisfaction in the past so that former users no longer participate in the Delta Plan.

## RELOCATION

While moving is a fact of Army life, there is some variation in the frequency of moves and in the spouse's reaction to the moves. The survey includes a number of questions relating to relocation, specifically frequency of moves and availability and use of support resources. Respondents were asked a) How many moves they have made in the last three years either locally or long distance; b) How many Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves they have made in the last three years. The results are presented below. (Appendix A: Q. 68, 69)

TABLE 17. NUMBER OF MOVES: TOTAL AND PCS

<u>Number of Moves</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>PCS</u>
None	21%	25%
1 move	27	52
2 moves	23	20
3 moves	18	3
4 or more moves	11	--

The figures for PCS moves refer only to respondents who made at least one move, omitting the 21% who made no moves; thus one-quarter of those who moved in the last three years did not make a PCS (i.e., they moved locally), about half made one PCS move, and the remaining quarter had at least two permanent changes of station.

The Army has developed a variety of support services and programs designed to assist families making a PCS move. Respondents are asked to indicate how they were provided with information on the new location **before** the move. The most common source of information is a welcome packet (33% cite this) followed by a sponsor letter (13%); only very small percentages report receiving individual or group counseling (3%) or using the ACS Relocation Automated Information System (5%).

Respondents also evaluate their satisfaction with a variety of Army relocation services and programs. Satisfaction refers only to those who have used the service. (Appendix A: Q. 71)

TABLE 18. ARMY RELOCATION PROGRAMS: USE AND SATISFACTION

<u>Service</u>	<u>Have not used</u>	<u>Have used</u>		
	<u>Very satis/ satisfied</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Dissat/ Verydis.</u>	
Pre-move destination information	33%	56%	18%	26%
Lending closet	67	62	25	13
Official installation information	50	45	23	32
Unit orientation	49	39	25	36
Overseas orientation	75	43	26	31
Post Guest House temporary lodging	42	56	12	32
Relocation counseling & information	89	38	27	35

We see that most of these services have not been used by either the majority or by large minorities of spouses. The most frequently used resource is pre-move information (67%) followed by guest lodging and unit orientation (58% and 51%, respectively). However, only a minority of respondents report using services such as overseas orientation, lending closets, and relocation counseling. These data, of course, do not reveal if non-usage is by choice or because the service was unavailable. Among those who use these services, only a minority tend to be dissatisfied; in each case, most are either satisfied or neutral. Pre-destination information, lending closet, and guest house lodging elicit the highest proportions of satisfied spouses. In response to a different group of items, only 8% of the sample report using ACS Relocation Assistance but we do not have data on satisfaction among this small group.

We can perhaps get a better idea of satisfaction or dissatisfaction by constructing a total score for relocation services. The range of values is 1 for very dissatisfied through 5 for very satisfied; these scores apply only to those who have used the service. Thus, scores can vary from a low of 7 (very dissatisfied) through a high of 35 (very satisfied). The distribution of Relocation Support scores divided into four equal categories is presented below.

TABLE 19.

SATISFACTION WITH RELOCATION SUPPORT

Relocation Support Score		<u>Frequency</u>
Very satisfied	(28-35)	19%
Satisfied	(21-27)	40
Dissatisfied	(14-20)	29
Very dissatisfied	( 7-13)	12

Since large groups of spouses have not used these services, the score is based on a small number of cases, about 15% of the total sample (ie., those who used all or most of the relocation services). Among this small group, three-fifths are found in the satisfied categories.

Earlier, we observed that the number of PCS moves bears no relationship to satisfaction with the Army as a way of life ( $r=.05$ ). However, relocation support does have an impact on overall satisfaction. We can show this in two different ways: first, the correlation between the relocation score and satisfaction with the Army as a way of life is .35, statistically significant at the .0001 level. Second, the table below shows the association between satisfaction with the Army as a way of life and the relocation score for each category of the latter.

TABLE 20. SATISFACTION WITH RELOCATION SERVICES AND ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army Way of Life</u>	<u>Relocation Services</u>			
	<u>Very satis.</u>	<u>Mod. Sat.</u>	<u>Mod. Dis.</u>	<u>Dissat.</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	76%	62%	46%	35%
Neutral	14	20	32	27
Dissatisfied/very dissatisfied	10	18	22	38

If we look at the extremes, the association between the two variables is very powerful: 76% of those who are very satisfied with relocation services are also very satisfied with the Army as a way of life compared to 35% of those dissatisfied with relocation services. Conversely, at the other extreme, the analogous figures are 10% and 38%, again showing a strong association between the two variables. Once again, these results are based on the very small group of users of relocation services.

In summary, most Army families have experienced relocation during the last three years. Among a number of services designed to assist relocation, pre-move information on the new location is most widely used (by two-thirds of the spouses) while relocation counseling is very seldom used. Among those who use relocation

services, the tendency is to be at least moderately satisfied. However, the most significant finding is the strong association, among users, between satisfaction with relocation services and overall satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. This contrasts sharply with the earlier data showing that number of PSC moves has no impact on overall satisfaction.

## HOUSING

Earlier, we observed that satisfaction with housing has a moderate correlation with overall satisfaction with the Army way of life ( $r=.21$ ). The survey includes other data on housing which can be examined more intensively. (Appendix A: Q. 58, 59, 60, 63)

Two basic questions are:

In which type of housing do you currently live?

In which type of housing would you currently most like to live?

TABLE 21. HOUSING: CURRENT AND PREFERRED TYPE OF RESIDENCE

Type of Housing	Current housing	Desired housing
On-post gov't housing	37%	44%
Off-post gov't housing	2	4
Off post (own)	22	43
Off post (rent)	35	7
Other	5	2

It is apparent that a substantial majority of respondents live either in government housing on post or in rental housing off post (72%). Most of the remainder own homes off post. The overwhelming majority prefer either government housing on post or owning their own home off post (87%). The most notable disparities between desired and actual housing are found in two categories: off-post renting is preferred by only 7% but is the current residence of 35%; conversely, 43% would like to own homes off post but only 22% are current owners.

With regard to satisfaction with current housing, most are either satisfied (35%) or very satisfied (28%), 20% feel neutral, and the remaining 17% are dissatisfied (11%) or very dissatisfied (6%).

Mobility is a way of life in the Army. The following figures indicate how long the respondent has lived in the present geographic location.

TABLE 22.

TIME IN PRESENT GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

<u>Length of Time</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Under six months	23%
6 months to one year	21
13 months to two years	24
2 - 4 years	24
Over 4 years	8

Forty-four per cent of the spouses have been living in their present geographic area for one year or less. Finally, we can examine the data on distance from post or from a military installation. Thirty-six per cent live on post, an equal percentage live within ten miles of the post, while nearly one-fifth live 11-25 miles away and 4% live between 26 and 50 miles away. The remainder live farther away or do not know where the nearest military installation is located.

We have indicated that housing satisfaction has some effect on overall satisfaction. At this point, we can examine some of the factors that may contribute to satisfaction with housing. Length of time in current housing is positively related to housing satisfaction but the association is weak ( $r=.10$ ). Similarly, distance from post bears virtually no relationship to housing satisfaction ( $r=-.05$ ); nearness to post is obviously not an important factor in housing satisfaction.

**Type** of housing is a categorical variable and, thus, it is inappropriate to apply correlational statistics to it. Instead, we will examine housing satisfaction for each type of current housing.

TABLE 23. HOUSING TYPE AND SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING  
Current Housing

<u>Housing Satisfaction</u>	<u>On-post gov't</u>	<u>Off-post gov't</u>	<u>Own</u>	<u>Rent</u>	<u>Other</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	68%	49	88%	49%	30%
Neutral	16	29	7	30	41
Dissatisfied/ very dissatisfied	16	22	5	21	29

It is apparent that owning a house is most likely to produce satisfaction with housing (88%) and least likely to cause dissatisfaction (only 5% of owners are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied). The majority are also satisfied with on-post government housing; however, only 30% are **very satisfied** compared to 57% of the owners. The highest percentage of dissatisfied

spouses is found among those in "other" housing which may include sharing a house, living with relatives, etc. (29%). However, off-post government and rental housing also show substantial dissatisfied groups (22% and 21%, respectively).

Housing satisfaction may be influenced not only by current housing but by desired housing. Respondents who are not living in the housing they prefer may be dissatisfied, regardless of their current type of residence. Using analysis of variance, we can examine a) The categories or types of housing in terms of housing satisfaction; and b) Types of housing and housing satisfaction, controlling on desired housing.

The table below shows the difference in F values for a) The relationship between housing type and housing satisfaction and b) The relationship between housing type and housing satisfaction when desired housing is controlled, i.e., held constant. In other words, if the respondents' current housing is different from their desired housing, does this affect housing satisfaction?

TABLE 24.

HOUSING TYPE AND SATISFACTION,  
CONTROLLING ON DESIRED HOUSING

	<u>F Value*</u>
a) Type of housing	114.06
b) Type of housing controlling on desired housing	59.85

There is a considerable reduction in the variance explained by housing type when desired housing is controlled. However, the F value remains significant at the .0001 level, indicating that type of housing has an important independent effect on housing satisfaction, regardless of respondents' preferred housing.

In summary, we observe that the majority of spouses are at least moderately satisfied with their current housing. Highest satisfaction is found among those who own their homes while off-post renters are the least satisfied. On-post government housing and off-post ownership are the preferred residential arrangements.

Finally, the association between current housing and housing satisfaction remains significant even when the effect of desired housing is controlled. That is, no matter what type of residence is preferred respondents currently living in certain types of housing tend to be more satisfied than those occupying other types of housing.

## ARMY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The survey includes considerable data on both use and evaluation of a variety of Army services and programs. The table below presents these data on three sets of programs: Army Community Services (ACS); recreation programs; business programs. For each service, column a indicates the percentage of spouses who **have used** the service within the last two years; column b shows the percentage who rate the service as one of the **three most important** in that program, whether or not they have actually used it. (Appendix A: Q. 73A1-A13, 75A1-A7, 76A1-A7)

TABLE 25. USE AND EVALUATION OF ARMY PROGRAMS

<u>Program</u>	(a)	(b)
	<u>Have Used</u>	<u>Most Important</u> (1, 2 or 3)
<u>ACS</u>		
Consumer Affairs/Financial counsel.	7%	22%
English instruction (ESL)	3	9
Exceptional Family Member	8	28
Family Advocate	3	14
Family Member Employment Assistance Program	15	33
Family support for mobilization/deploy.		
prior to mobil/deploy	8	20
during mobil/deploy	12	23
after mobil/deploy	6	7
Foster child care	1	7
Income tax preparation	17	15
Information & Referral	10	19
Outreach programs	3	13
Relocation Assistance	8	31
<u>Recreation Programs</u>		
Army library	57%	70%
Army recreation center	43	45
Army Sports Program	18	22
Arts and crafts	21	23
Auto crafts	22	24
Entertainment (music, theater)	44	44
Outdoor recreation activities	37	33
<u>Business Programs</u>		
Bowling center	49%	25%
Fitness center	44	61
Golf course	11	7
Information, ticketing	42	46
Registration Office (ITR)		
Officer, NCO or Enlisted Club	40	23
Post movie theater	53	38
Post Youth Activities Program	22	58

We should note that the evaluation of importance was made separately within each category of programs (ACS, recreation and business).

It is apparent that only a minority of respondents have used the ACS programs and services in the last two years. The most widely used service is income tax preparation and even in this case, only 17% report using it. Of course, many of these services are inapplicable to most spouses (e.g., English instruction (ESL), Exceptional Family Member, Foster Child) and we would not expect many people to have used them. In terms of importance, spouses are most likely to rate Family Member Employment Assistance, Relocation Assistance, and Exceptional Family Member as most important. Thus, evaluation of a program's importance is not necessarily based on personal use.

The recreation programs are used by much larger groups of spouses: the library, music and theater, recreation center and outdoor recreation are used by 37-57% of the spouses. Interestingly, the library is ranked as most important far more often than any other recreational program (70% compared to 45% for the recreation center). Generally, usage and importance tend to follow the same rank order; the most widely patronized recreational activities are also likely to be considered the most important.

The results are quite different with regard to business programs which consist of a different set of recreational activities. These programs tend to reflect fairly wide usage. Movies, Bowling, Fitness Centers, Information, Ticketing and Registration office (ITR), and Clubs are patronized by 40-53% and only the golf course and youth programs show relatively little use. In this case, importance is not consistent with usage; fitness centers are ranked as important by 61% but are used by only 44%; the same is true for youth activities, used by 22% but considered important by over half of the respondents. Conversely, smaller percentages rate movies and clubs as important (38% and 23%, respectively) but much larger groups report using these facilities. These results suggest that respondents are ranking importance in terms of some general criterion, rather than personal experience or desire to use the service. We should also point out that respondents may feel certain programs are important to others (e.g., youth, soldiers) and use this standard in ranking them.

### CONSUMER SERVICES

There is only a small amount of material in the survey relating directly to consumer services. The table below shows the responses in terms of use and satisfaction for four consumer services. They are listed in order of usage.

(Appendix A: Q. 72A1-A20)

TABLE 26. CONSUMER SERVICES: USE AND SATISFACTION

	<u>Service</u>	<u>Have</u>	<u>Have Used</u>		<u>Dissatis/ very dissat</u>
	<u>Very satis/ satis.</u>	<u>not used</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>very dissat</u>	
Post Exchange	3%	75%	12%	14%	
Commissary	4	80	10	11	
Fast food restaurants on post	16	72	18	9	
Post cafeterias	60	64	25	12	

It is clear that the two basic consumer services provided by the Army, the PX and the commissary, are both widely used and provide satisfactory service according to most spouses. Nearly all spouses use these two services (97% and 96% respectively) and the great majority are at least satisfied in both cases. Furthermore, only small minorities (14% and 11%) are clearly dissatisfied while the remainder take a neutral attitude. Most respondents have used the fast food restaurants on post (84%) and again, most of these are satisfied (62%). Of course, in this case, we can assume that dissatisfied customers would not continue to patronize the restaurants. The post cafeterias, on the other hand, are used by less than half (40%) and again, most users are satisfied.

Respondents' satisfaction with the PX and commissary has a modest but significant effect on other attitudes. The table below presents the correlations between satisfaction with the PX and commissary and satisfaction with the Army as a way of life, perception of the Army's support and concern for families, and family support on various levels as measured by a score.

TABLE 27. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN GENERAL ATTITUDES  
AND CONSUMER SERVICES

Correlation coefficient

	Army way of life	Army concern for families	Family support score
PX	.19	.24	.23
Commissary	.27	.27	.24

Satisfaction with the commissary has a slightly stronger impact than does the PX, especially on overall satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. However, generally the correlations are very similar for the two services. They have a strong correlation with each other ( $r=.51$ ), suggesting that respondents tend to have fairly similar attitudes toward the PX and the commissary.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

The survey includes a variety of questions relating to spouses' employment status, occupation, earnings, job aspirations, and job satisfaction. (Appendix A: Q. 95, 96, 102A1-A13)

Over one-third (37%) of the respondents did not work for pay either full time or part time in the year preceding the survey (November 1990 through October 1991). Their current employment status is presented in the table below.

TABLE 28. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF SPOUSES

<u>Employment Status</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Working full-time	30%
Working part-time	16
Unemployed, currently looking for work	14
Unemployed, not currently looking for work but would like to work	19
Unemployed, not looking for work and do not want to work now	21

These data indicate that close to half of the respondents are currently employed and another third would like to work. About one-fifth can be considered out of the labor force as they are not employed and do not want to work at this time. The group that is unemployed, not looking for work but would like to work (19%) may at least partially reflect discouraged job seekers who have given up an unsuccessful search for employment.

Most spouses are employed in the traditional "female" occupations (97% of the spouses in the survey are female). The single largest group (25%) is in clerical occupations, followed by 15% each in professional (e.g., teacher, social worker, nurse, accountant) and service jobs (e.g., beautician, waitress, household worker), 9% in sales, and 8% in managerial/administrative positions. Only very small percentages are proprietors, skilled craftsmen, or laborers.

In terms of job satisfaction, respondents indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a series of job components: salary; promotion opportunities; challenge; level of responsibility; job security; job location; opportunity to progress in career; use of educational background; use of skills and abilities; working hours; co-workers; supervisors. The percentage who are very satisfied or satisfied ranges from a low of 29% for promotion opportunities to a high of 76% for co-workers; in most cases, at least half of the respondents are satisfied.

We can compute a score for all components of the job, assigning a values of 1 to "very dissatisfied" through 5 for very satisfied." Thus total scores range from 12 through 60, a high score reflecting a favorable total evaluation of the job. The table below divides the scores into four equal categories and shows the distribution of respondents.

TABLE 29. JOB SATISFACTION AMONG SPOUSES

<u>Job Satisfaction Score</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Very satisfied (47 - 60)	29%
Satisfied (33 - 46)	57
Dissatisfied (19 - 32)	13
Very dissatisfied (5 - 18)	1

The distribution is sharply skewed toward the positive with only 14% falling into the dissatisfied categories. The median score is 42, again showing the preponderance of positive evaluations.

We can compare the job satisfaction score among different occupational groups. Occupations are divided into three broad groups as follows: blue collar (28%); white collar, clerical etc. (40%); managerial/professional (32%). The following table shows the level of satisfaction for each group.

TABLE 30. TYPE OF OCCUPATION AND JOB SATISFACTION

<u>Job Satisfaction Score</u>	<u>Blue Collar</u>	<u>White collar</u>	<u>Prof/Mgr</u>
Very satisfied	17%	27%	39%
Satisfied	65	55	54
Dissatisfied	16	17	6
Very dissatisfied	2	1	1

It is apparent that professionals/managers are most likely to be very satisfied and least likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs. However, most of the respondents, regardless of their occupational level, are satisfied in terms of job components - if we combine the satisfied and very satisfied, the figures are 82%, 82% and 93% for the three occupational categories, respectively.

We can examine the effect of several factors related to employment on overall satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. The table below shows the association between satisfaction and employment status.

TABLE 31. EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND THE ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army Way of Life</u>	<u>Employed</u>		<u>Unemployed</u>		
	<u>Full Time</u>	<u>Part Time</u>	<u>Looking</u>	<u>Want work</u>	<u>Do not want wk</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	73%	72%	63%	67	7
Neutral	17	19	21	18	17
Dissatisfied/ very dissat.	10	9	15	15	11

These data suggest that it is not employment status *per se* that affects overall satisfaction. Rather, employment status must be considered in conjunction with aspirations. It is the disparity between employment status and employment aspirations that has a negative effect on overall satisfaction. Unemployed spouses who are looking for work are the least satisfied, followed by the unemployed who would like to work. On the other hand, unemployed spouses who do not want to work do not differ in terms of overall satisfaction from their working counterparts. Unfortunately, we do not have comparable data on working spouses who would prefer not to work, another group with inconsistent status and aspirations.

We can also examine the association between job satisfaction (based on the score and categories of job satisfaction described above) and overall satisfaction with the Army way of life.

TABLE 32. JOB SATISFACTION AND THE ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army Way of Life</u>	<u>Job Satisfaction Score</u>			
	<u>Very satis.</u>	<u>Satis.</u>	<u>Dissat.</u>	<u>Very Dis.</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	77%	67%	43%	27%
Neutral	14	26	29	48
Dissatisfied/very dissatisfied	9	7	28	25

Job satisfaction, as measured by the score on job components, has

a clear and largely linear association with overall satisfaction with Army life. As job satisfaction increases, the percentage who like Army life rises from 27% to 77% while the dissatisfied decrease from 25% to 9% of the spouses. Thus, while employment status *per se* has little effect on overall satisfaction, attitude toward one's job does have a strong influence.

The survey includes data on job-seeking. With regard to a number of job-seeking sources, respondents who have looked for work within the last three years are asked to indicate a) if they used any of these sources and b) if used, how helpful were they. The results are shown below. (Appendix A: Q. 97A2-A7)

TABLE 33. EMPLOYMENT SOURCES: USE AND SATISFACTION

<u>Job Source</u>	<u>Not used</u>		<u>Used, how helpful</u>			
	<u>Extremely</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	
CPO (previous install)	64%	15%	18%	22%	15%	31%
CPO (new install)	57	10	13	23	17	37
Civilian Employ. Agency	66	10	17	23	22	28
Military friends	51	17	24	26	19	15
Civilian friends	46	22	27	23	17	11
Unit/installation newspaper	58	8	15	22	20	34

Several results emerge from these data. First, the most widely used sources are interpersonal and informal, i.e., military and 7-6civilian friends and acquaintances. Second, the Civilian Personnel Office has been used by only a minority of spouses while civilian agencies are used least of all. Third, if we combine response categories, extremely/very helpful and a little/not at all helpful, we find the following ranking of job-seeking sources as either helpful or unhelpful. The list is in descending order of helpfulness.

TABLE 34. HELPFULNESS OF EMPLOYMENT SOURCES

<u>Source</u>	<u>Helpful</u>	<u>Unhelpful</u>
Civilian friends or acquaintances	49%	28%
Military friends or acquaintances	41	34
CPO (previous installation)	33	46
Civilian employment agency	27	50
Unit/installation newspaper	23	54
CPO (new installation)	23	54

Once again, informal sources, both military and civilian, are evaluated more favorably than are all formal or organizational sources. It is possible that negative opinions of formal employment agencies have been expressed and communicated by some spouses, thus discouraging use by others who are job-seeking. It should be noted that the data on "helpfulness" is based on relatively small samples of respondents who used employment services (34-54% of the total).

An alternative explanation is that non-usage of formal sources is due to lack of knowledge. An example of this is observed in a question dealing with the Military Spouse

7-7Preference Program for employment. Over half of the respondents indicate that they have never heard of this program.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the 1987 Survey of Army Families revealed considerable dissatisfaction with the Civilian Personnel Office, especially evident among the comments volunteered by respondents.

#### VOLUNTEER WORK

Volunteer work apparently is not a major activity among Army spouses. The tables below show the number of hours spouses spent on volunteer activities during the last three months.

(Appendix A: Q.92A1, 92B1)

TABLE 35. VOLUNTEER WORK

<u>Number of Hours</u>	<u>Organizations</u>	
	<u>Military</u>	<u>Civilian</u>
None 90%	89%	89%
1 - 5	3	4
6 - 10	1	1
11 - 20	1	2
21 - 40	2	2
Over 40	3	3

There is virtually no difference between the two sets of figures. Only about 10% of spouses have recently engaged in volunteer work; the largest groups in each case have volunteered either very few hours (5 or under) or over 40 hours. However, percentages are so small that it is impossible to draw any further conclusions from these data. The major finding is that only a small group of spouses engaged in any volunteer work, either military or civilian, in the three months preceding the survey. It is possible that ODS had some effect. Spouses may have dropped volunteer work because they left the installation or because of additional family responsibilities due to soldier

deployment and, at the time of survey, had not yet resumed their usual volunteer activities. A comparison between respondents who moved and those who stayed on post during ODS shows that the latter are more likely to do volunteer work, both military and civilian, but the differences are quite small.

The two types of volunteer work show a very modest intercorrelation of .11, suggesting that to a small extent, the same spouses volunteer in both military and civilian organizations.

The table below divides spouses into those who do not volunteer and those who do, irrespective of the number of hours. For each group, the table shows the percentage who are satisfied or dissatisfied with the Army as a way of life.

TABLE 36. VOLUNTEER WORK AND THE ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army as a Way of Life</u>	<u>Military</u>		<u>Civilian</u>	
	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	61%	74%	33%	28%
Neutral	23	20	39	43
Dissatisfied/very dissatisfied	16	6	28	28

There is an interesting finding in these data. Volunteers in military organization are more likely to be satisfied with the Army way of life than are non-volunteers (74-61%). However, for volunteers in civilian organizations, differences are small and in the direction of slightly **lesser** satisfaction with Army life among volunteers. These data suggest that participation in military organizations is related to satisfaction; however, the direction of causality is not clear. While volunteers may develop a more positive feeling about Army life, it is equally possible that spouses who enjoy Army life are more likely to do volunteer work in military organizations. On the other hand, volunteering in civilian organizations may be totally unrelated to feelings about Army life or may reflect negative feelings, i.e., a desire to distance oneself from the military community by participating in civilian organizations. These are merely speculations; the total number of spouses who do volunteer work is too small for any detailed statistical analysis.

## CHILD CARE

The data on employment indicate that almost half of the spouses are currently employed and another third are either looking for work or would like to work. These results suggest that child care is a highly salient issue in the present-day Army community.

The great majority of respondents, 80%, have dependent children (defined as under 21, under 23 and attending college or handicapped). Most spouses with dependent children (98%) report that these children are living with them. Furthermore, very large percentages have pre-school children, the group most in need of child care. The table below shows the number of children in each age group for the 80% of the respondents who have dependent children. (Appendix A: Q. 82A1-A7, 83)

TABLE 37. NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>One</u>	<u>Two</u>	<u>Three</u>	<u>Four+</u>
0 - 2 years	84%	15%	--	--
3 - 4 years	89	9	1	1
5 - 12 years	57	32	8	3
13 - 17 years	71	27	2	--
18 - 22 years	80	17	1	1
23+ years	94	4	2	--

These data indicate that, among respondents with dependent children, the majority has either one or two children in the pre-school age categories (0 through four years). Of course, older children, particularly those under 13, may need after-school care for part of the day.

The survey includes one question asking where the youngest child is cared for when the respondent or spouse is not available. Twenty-one per cent of the respondents with children do not use child care at all. Among the 79% who do, we see the following distribution, in descending order of use.  
(Appendix A: Q. 86A2-A9)

Note: The data which follow in this section are based on about 63% of the total sample, i.e., 79% who use child care among the 80% who have dependent children.

TABLE 38.

USE OF CHILD CARE FACILITIES

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Neighbor	26%
Baby sitter (trained, unlicensed)	23
Other	15
Child care center on post	9
Child care center off post	7
Nursery/preschool	7
Elementary/secondary school	5
Family child care home sponsored by Army (licensed)	5
My own home by himself/herself	4

It is apparent that informal child care arrangements such as 8-2neighbors, baby sitters, and "other" (which may include relatives) are used more than are the formal facilities such as child care centers both on and off post and preschool facilities. About half of the spouses use neighbors and baby sitters while only 14% use Army facilities, e.g., child care centers on post or family child care homes sponsored by the Army.

With regard to the child care described above, the survey asks a) cost per month and b) number of hours of child care used last month. (These questions again apply only to the respondent's **youngest** child.) The results are summarized below.  
(Appendix A: Q. 87, 88)

TABLE 39.

HOURS AND COST OF CHILD CARE

<u>Number of hours</u>	<u>Freq.</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Freq.</u>
0 - 20	28%	\$ 0 - 10	35%
21 - 50	16	11 - 50	16
51 - 100	17	51 - 100	11
101 - 160	25	101 - 200	20
161+	13	201+	17

In terms of hours, relatively few spouses use child care full time (i.e., 40 hours a week or 160 hours or more per month) while over two-fifths use it 50 hours or less per month. Similarly, over half spent \$50 or less on child care last month. These data suggest that child care is used on an occasional and part time basis, rather than on a systematic full time-schedule. This is consistent with the preponderant use of baby sitters and neighbors rather than formal child care agencies.

These results also raise the question as to child care used by

spouses working full time (30% of the total). Although some employed respondents may have older children, we can assume that many need day care. In fact, the great majority of full and part-time workers (84% and 93%, respectively) have at least one dependent child under six years of age. The data indicate that respondents who work full time are more likely than others to use child care centers off post, nursery and pre-schools, and licensed family homes and least likely to utilize neighbors for day care.

The majority of spouses are satisfied with the child care arrangements that they use; 42% are very satisfied, 34% satisfied, 16% neutral, and only 8% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. However, if we examine satisfaction for different types of child care, we find considerable variation: schools, on-post child care centers, and nursery/pre-schools elicit the largest satisfied groups, 78%, 77% and 74% respectively. This contrasts with one's own home, baby sitters, and off-post child care centers, which show 22%, 32% and 33% satisfied, respectively.

The survey also includes a series of items asking for an evaluation of different aspects of Army child care services in the current location. A small percentage, 5%, indicate that no such services exist. For the remainder, the results are listed below; the first column shows the proportion who have **not** used Army child care services and the next three columns record the evaluation of these services among users only. (Appendix A: Q.90A1-A10)

TABLE 40. ARMY CHILD CARE SERVICES: USE AND SATISFACTION

<u>Army Child Care Services</u>	<u>Have not used</u>	<u>Have used</u>		
		<u>Very sat/ satis.</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Dissat/ very dissat.</u>
Availability (center)	56%	46%	13%	40%
Hours	" 58	48	20	32
Location	" 55	77	15	8
Flexibility	" 66	40	31	29
Quality of edu. programs	" 67	60	25	16
Quality of licensed family care homes	73	51	26	23
Availability of drop-in care	64	35	21	43
Cost of child care	52	37	20	44
Ease of getting child care	51	34	18	48

The first five items refer to Army day care centers only, the

next item refers to licensed homes, and the last three to Army child care in general. Several conclusions emerge from these data: first, large proportions, ranging from half to three-quarters of the respondents, have not used these services; second, among the users, most are satisfied with location, quality of educational programs, and quality of licensed homes. Satisfaction is somewhat lower for flexibility (e.g., meeting special needs such as illness), and least for cost, availability of drop-in care, and ease of getting child care. In the cases of cost, ease and drop-in care, more spouses are dissatisfied than are satisfied. These data suggest a need for easily available and flexible part-time child care.

Finally, we can construct a score which sums up the evaluation of the different aspects of Army child care. A low value is assigned to a negative rating and a high value to satisfaction. Scores range from 9 through 45 and show the following distribution.

Note: This score is based on a minority of respondents: of the 63% with dependent children who use day care, only those who have used Army child care facilities are included in this score (about 14% of the original sample).

TABLE 41. SATISFACTION WITH ARMY CHILD CARE

<u>Child Care Score</u>		<u>Frequency</u>
Very satisfied	(37-45)	14%
Satisfied	(28-36)	34
Dissatisfied	(19-27)	38
Very dissatisfied	( 9-18)	14

We observe a fairly symmetrical distribution with a minority (14% each) in the two extreme categories. In total, the sample divides fairly evenly - 48% satisfied, 52% dissatisfied with Army child care services.

We can examine whether feelings about quality and availability of child care affect more general attitudes toward Army life. The correlation coefficients below show the association between the score on child care satisfaction and a) satisfaction with the Army as a way of life and b) family support score which reflects perceptions about concern and support for families at various levels of the Army.

TABLE 42.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ARMY CHILD CARE  
AND GENERAL ATTITUDES

	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>
Army as a way of life	.31
Family support score	.42

Child care satisfaction is strongly associated with perception of family support; it is also related, although not as strongly, to overall satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. It is likely that evaluation of child care affects overall evaluation of Army life both directly and indirectly, through perceptions of concern. This path model shows both the direct and indirect associations between child care and overall satisfaction.

**PATH MODEL**

Army child care   Family Support   Army way of life satisfaction  
 The original correlation between satisfaction with child care and overall satisfaction is .31; this is reduced to .17, when perception of family support is entered into the model. Thus, the direct effect is weakened, but not eliminated, when family support is taken into account. Similarly, the original correlation of .46 between family support and satisfaction with the Army way of life is decreased to .33 when child care satisfaction is controlled. To sum up, both child care satisfaction and perception of family support contribute directly to overall satisfaction. Moreover, each factor contributes indirectly through its association with the other, i.e., child care satisfaction relates to family support perception which, in turn, relates to Army way of life. To a lesser extent, the association between family support and overall satisfaction is partially dependent on child care satisfaction.

Another way to examine the association between satisfaction with child care and with the Army way of life is presented in the following table, using the score categories described earlier.

TABLE 43:            ARMY CHILD CARE AND ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army as a Way of Life</u>	<u>Very satis.</u>	<u>Satis.</u>	<u>Dissat.</u>	<u>Very dis.</u>
Very satisfied/satis	.93%	72%	64%	27%
Neutral	6	20	20	12
Dissatisfied/very dis.	--	8	15	61

This table shows a very strong linear association between the two variables. Nearly all the respondents who are very satisfied with Army child care also reflect overall satisfaction (93%). This declines strikingly to 27% among those very dissatisfied with child care. Conversely, for those who are dissatisfied with

child care, the analogous figures for overall satisfaction are 0% and 61%, respectively, reflecting an extremely strong association. It is fair to conclude from these data that feelings about child care provided by the Army have an important effect on general satisfaction among spouses.

If we compare the association between child care satisfaction and overall satisfaction with Army life among spouses with different employment statuses, we find relatively little variation. Whether the respondent is working full time, part time or is not employed, she is more likely to feel positive about the Army way of life if she is satisfied with child care. While the statistical association is strongest among the full-time employed, it is very powerful among the other categories as well.

YOUTH ISSUES

There is relatively little material in the survey on youth issues, i.e., issues affecting young people, 6 to 18 years of age. First, among the 80% of respondents who have dependent children, how many have children in the "youth" age categories. The question is worded in terms of how many dependent children within each of the following age groups: (Appendix A: Q. A4-A5)

TABLE 44. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN YOUTH CATEGORY

	<u>One</u>	<u>Two</u>	<u>Three</u>	<u>Four+</u>
5 - 12 years	57%	32%	8%	1%
13 - 17 years	71	27	2	--

The age groups do not match exactly but these data do indicate that the majority of respondents with dependent children have at least one child in the "youth" age group.

Second, the series of questions on Army programs and services includes one item referring to Post Youth Activities Program. (Note: see section on Army Programs and Services above.) This program consists of activities such as swimming and dancing lessons, scouts, athletics, etc. While only 22% of the respondents have used this program, 58% rank it as one of the three most important programs and services. In usage it ranks as the second lowest but, in terms of importance, it is exceeded only by the Fitness Center and the library. This suggests that although many respondents cannot use the program (i.e., have no children of appropriate age), they recognize that it provides a valuable service to others. Of course, many of the other programs such as the library, entertainment, and movie theater, although not specifically geared to the 6-18 year age group, also provide recreation for youth.

Third, the question of schools is highly relevant to this age group. Seventy-two per cent of the of all respondents have children in kindergarten through twelfth grade. These children attend a variety of types of schools: DODD, military schools on post, public schools on and off post, and private or parochial schools. The following table shows the proportion of parents who are satisfied or dissatisfied with each type of school attended

by their children. The figures in parentheses at the bottom of each column indicate the proportion who do not attend each type of school. The percent satisfied/dissatisfied applies only to those with children in each type of school. Thus, in most cases, the data is based on a minority of parents, i.e., the percentage of those with children in K-12 grade who attend each type of school. In the case of DODD schools, this would be 20% of 72% or 14% of the total sample.

(Appendix A: Q. 84A1-A6)

TABLE 45. SATISFACTION WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCHOOLS

<u>Private</u>	<u>DODDs post</u>	<u>US Mil on post</u>	?	<u>Public off post</u>	<u>Public paroch.</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	69%	76%	67%	66%	78%
Neutral	14	18	17	14	16
Dissatisfied/ very dissat.	17	7	16	21	6
No child attends	(80%)	(75%)	(66%)	(30%)	(89%)

We can draw several conclusions from these data. First, most parents are satisfied with the schools, whatever the type; at least two-thirds of all parents are satisfied or very satisfied with the schools their children attend. The highest proportion who are satisfied is found among those whose children attend military schools on post in the US or private/parochial schools (76% and 78% are satisfied). For private/parochial schools, the percentage who are **very** satisfied reaches 52%, compared to 33% for US post schools. It is not surprising that private schools elicit such a favorable response; obviously, parents who are dissatisfied would probably choose an alternative. However, the proportion attending private school is only 11% (89% indicate no child attends). The majority of children (70%) attend off-post public schools while minorities ranging from 11% to 34% attend the other types of schools. The proportion of satisfied parents is very similar for DODD schools as well as for public schools both on and off-post, two-thirds are satisfied in each case.

## ENTITLEMENTS

The survey does not include a specific section on entitlements (e.g., retirement, benefits, housing, etc.) for Army families. However, there are data relevant to entitlements in the questions on retention, i.e., career plans. Respondents are asked if they would like the soldiers to stay in the Army beyond the present obligation. Respondents who want the soldier to remain in the Army beyond the present obligation (81% of the total sample) are asked to indicate the major reasons for wanting the soldiers to remain in the Army. The responses are in terms of the **most** important/ strongest reason; the **second most** important reason; the **third** most important reason. Below are the three factors, out of a possible eleven, mentioned most frequently in each category.

(Appendix A: Q. 41A1, 41B1, 41C1)

TABLE 46. MAJOR REASONS FOR REMAINING IN THE ARMY

<u>First Choice</u>	<u>Second choice</u>	<u>Third Choice</u>
Security & stability	Security & stability	Medical care
Satisfaction with	Medical care for family	Retirement pay
Army job		& benefits
Retirement pay	Retirement pay	Security &
& benefits	& benefits	stability

We can see that three factors, security, retirement, and medical care account for most of the first three choices. These all relate to either economic benefits or entitlements. Only satisfaction with Army job refers to a different dimension of Army work and life.

The table below sums up the percentage of spouses who choose each factor as the first, second, or third most important reason for staying in the Army. These are listed in descending order of frequency of choice.

TABLE 46. RANK ORDER OF REASONS FOR REMAINING IN THE ARMY

<u>Reason</u>	<u>First, Second or Third Choice</u>
Security and stability	50%
Medical care for family	36
Retirement pay & benefits	33
Satisfaction with Army job	32
Limited job opportunities outside Army	22
Pay and allowances	19
Opportunity to develop job skills	17
Opportunity to serve country	16
Opportunities to travel	9
Other	3
Army support services for family	2

This ranking shows even more dramatically the importance of economic/entitlement factors in the respondents' attitudes toward

retention. The first seven ranks include mostly entitlements, benefits, and economic factors. Only satisfaction with soldier's Army job is an exception. It is perhaps noteworthy that opportunity to serve one's country ranks quite low as a reason to stay in the Army. Finally, Army support services, while they certainly have an impact on the respondents' feelings about Army life, are at the bottom of the list in terms of reasons for retention.

## STRESSES OF ARMY LIFE

The survey includes several sets of questions dealing with problems and stressors related to Army life. The first group asks respondents whether they agree or disagree with the following statements. (Note: "spouse" refers to soldier in the first item; strongly agree and agree are combined as are strongly disagree-disagree).

(Appendix A: Q. 107A1-A7)

TABLE 48. INTERACTION WITH ARMY AGENCIES AND PERSONNEL

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Undecided</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
My spouse has kept me well informed about the Army	80%	12%	9%
I keep myself well informed about the Army	66	20	13
I feel comfortable dealing with Army agencies	50	26	24
I feel comfortable dealing with Army medical system while spouse is away	69	15	16
Army civilian employees treat family members with respect	36	27	36
Spouses of deployed soldiers deserve special treatment by the Army	48%	29%	23%
It is the Army's responsibility to solve all problems of spouses of deployed soldiers	19	19	61

The first five items refer to feelings of comfort, ease, and knowledgeability in dealing with the Army and its agencies. We can construct a score based on these five items which we call "Army-Family Interaction." Values of 1 through 5 are assigned to each response, so that scores range from 5, indicating low satisfaction, through 25, reflecting high satisfaction with Army-family interaction.

TABLE 49. ARMY FAMILY INTERACTION

<u>Army Family Interaction Score</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Very satisfactory (21-25)	22%
Satisfactory (16-20)	52
Unsatisfactory (11-15)	22
Very unsatisfactory ( 5-10)	4

These data show that most spouses are comfortable with the Army and its agencies - almost three-quarters find Army-family interaction either satisfactory or very satisfactory while only 26% describe it as unsatisfactory.

The last two statements are somewhat different in content from the Army-Family Interaction items. These statements refer to special treatment for families of deployed soldiers and Army responsibility for solving their problems. Each statement shows a distinct response pattern. While nearly half of the respondents believe spouses of deployed soldiers should get special treatment, less than one-fifth

think the Army has to solve all their problems.

Finally, a third group of questions relates to stresses and problems associated with Army life. ("Spouse" refers to soldier in these questions.)

TABLE 50.

PROBLEMS OF ARMY LIFE

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Slight/not a problem</u>	<u>Moderate problem</u>	<u>Very/serious problem</u>
Coping with day-to-day stresses and problems	76%	18%	6%
Demands Army makes of family members	66	28	10
Getting along when spouse is away	70	21	9
Opportunities to achieve personal goals	60	21	20
Possibility that spouse may be involved in combat	47	26	26
Separations from my own family	67	22	11
Possibility that spouse may be involuntarily released from Army	43	20	36

The item which is the most important source of stress is involuntarily release or separation from the Army; over one-third find this a serious or very serious problem. No doubt this concern has been exacerbated by the recent policy of downsizing the Army. Twenty-six per cent of the respondents worry about combat, probably reflecting the fact that the questionnaire was administered shortly after the Gulf War. In all the other cases, only a small minority (9-20%) find the issue a serious or a very serious problem.

These items have been combined into an Army Stress score; we have omitted the question on involuntary release since it reflects a somewhat different type of problem, i.e., a fear that one **cannot** remain in the Army, rather than a problem inherent in the nature of Army life. The six-item score has a range of 6 through 30, a low score reflecting serious problems, a high score slight or no problems with these issues.

TABLE 51.

STRESS OF ARMY LIFE

<u>Army Stress Score</u>		<u>Frequency</u>
No/slight problems	(25-30)	43%
Some problems	(18-24)	39
Moderate problems	(12-18)	16
Serious problems	( 6-11)	2

Very few spouses report serious problems with regard to military life stressors. Over 80% of the respondents score in the two low stress categories while 18% report moderate to serious stress. In a later section, we will examine the association between stress and retention.

## LIFE DOMAIN PROBLEMS AND DEPRESSION

In the previous section, we examined certain stressors clearly related to military life. Respondents also experience problems in various life domains which may or may not be related to military life. A series of questions asks whether the respondent or family has experienced any of the following in the last six months: (Appendix A: Q. 108A1-A7)

Job-related problem  
Emotional or nervous problem  
Drug/alcohol related problem  
Stress-related problem  
Financial difficulty  
Family violence  
Parenting difficulty

If we construct an additive score, assigning a value of 1 to each type of problem experienced, the following distribution results:

TABLE 52. LIFE DOMAIN PROBLEMS

<u>Number of Problems</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Low (1 - 2)	60%
Medium (3 - 4)	32
High (5 - 7)	8

We see that everyone experienced problems in at least one life domain. However, only about one-third report three to four problem areas and only 8% more than four. If we examine the individual life domains, the most frequently reported areas are financial difficulties (45%) and stress-related problems (41%). On the other hand, only 3% and 4% cite drug/alcohol problems or family violence, respectively.

An indicator of general well being in the survey consists of a depression score, based on the frequency of each of the following feelings within the last seven days: (Appendix A: Q. 112A1-A7)

Could not get going  
Felt sad  
Trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep  
Felt everything was an effort  
Felt lonely  
Felt you could not shake the blues  
Trouble keeping your mind on what you were doing

Values of 0 through 7 are assigned to responses indicating none through 7 days for each item; scores reflect the combination of symptoms and frequency and range from 0 through 49. The results follow.

TABLE 53. DEPRESSION AMONG SPOUSES

<u>Depression Score</u>		<u>Frequency</u>
None (0)		19%
Low (1 - 16)		62
Medium (17 - 32)		12
High (33 - 49)		7

Almost one-fifth of the respondents experienced none of the symptoms during the previous week and only 7% report high scores reflecting either multiple and/or frequent symptoms. The distribution is highly skewed toward low depression among Army spouses (e.g., the median score falls between the very low values of 4 and 5). These results indicate generally positive well being among spouses and, although not necessarily based on military life, are highly consistent with earlier data reflecting relatively low stress and problems related to Army life.

It is likely that many of these factors relating to stress, life domains, and affect are interrelated as all reflect aspects of well-being (or lack of well-being). The correlation matrix below presents these interrelationships, among Army-family interaction, life domain problems, depression, Army stressors, and feelings about the Army as a way of life.

TABLE 54. INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG STRESSORS AND AFFECT

	Army-Fam Army inter.	Life Dom. prob.	Depress	Stress way life
Army-fam interaction	-.26	-.23	.30	.41
Life Dom. problems	-.26	-.43	-.32	-.24
Depression	-.23	.43	-.43	-.26
Army stress (low)	.30	-.32	-.43	-.39
Army as way of life	.41	-.24	-.26	.39

We see moderate-to-strong intercorrelations among all five variables. The extent and intensity of life domain problems and depressive symptoms are strongly interrelated ( $r = .43$ ). Both of these are negatively correlated with a favorable view of Army-family interaction, low stress, and satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. And, finally, satisfaction with Army life is associated fairly strongly with positive Army-family interaction and low stress ( $r$ 's = .41 and .39, respectively).

These results are not surprising as all the variables bear on well-being of the respondent. Thus, problems and stress, whether due to military life or to other factors, contribute to depression and to general dissatisfaction. Respondents who are comfortable with the Army, its agencies, etc. (i.e., Army-family interaction) are likely to experience fewer problems, lower stress and depression and to have a favorable view of Army life. Although this causal sequence seems logical, other explanations may be valid. For example, spouses who like military life may be less depressed and perceive lower stress and problems; in this case, satisfaction with military life may be considered a cause, rather than an outcome. There may be circular effects in which

positive affect (low depression, stress, problems) contributes to satisfaction with military life which, in turn, reinforces positive affect and general well being.

We can construct a theoretical model incorporating several of these affect variables and examine their impact on overall satisfaction with Army life. The path model below shows this causal sequence.

**PATH MODEL**

Life Domain Problems

Depression

Army Way of Life

Army stress

This path model shows the following results.

1. The two exogenous variables, life domain problems and Army stress, are correlated, i.e., low stress is associated with fewer problems ( $r=-.32$ ). Each relates to depressive affect; however, the original correlation between Army stress and depression is reduced from  $-.42$  to  $-.30$  when life domain problems are controlled. The same is true for problems and depression when stress is controlled ( $r=.43$ , Beta =  $.34$ ). Despite this reduction, both problems and stress retain a considerable independent effect on depression (Betas =  $.34$  and  $-.30$ , respectively).

2. The picture is notably different for depression. Originally, it shows a moderate correlation with overall satisfaction ( $r = -.26$ ). This is virtually eliminated when problems and stress are controlled (Beta =  $-.03$ ); in other words, in the absence of life domain problems and Army stress, depression has no significant impact on satisfaction.

3. On the other hand, Army stress retains considerable direct influence on satisfaction, when life domain problems and depression are controlled. The original correlation of  $.39$  between stress and satisfaction is reduced only slightly, to  $.35$ , when the other variables are taken into account.

4. Life domain problems also retain a direct impact on satisfaction, but it is considerably reduced in strength when other variables are introduced into the path model ( $r = -.24$ , Beta =  $-.12$ ).

In summary, it is not surprising that stressors stemming from military life have the most powerful effect on general satisfaction with Army life. Other problems have some effect while depression, per se, has little association with military life satisfaction in the absence of problems and stress.

## RETENTION

In the earlier section on quality of Army life, we described data related to making the Army a career. In this section, we will examine this area more intensively with the objective of identifying factors that influence career attitudes and decisions.

There are three basic questions in the survey dealing with the Army as a career. A general question asks:  
(Appendix A: Q. 106A3)

"How would you feel if your spouse were to make the Army a career"

Two more specific items are: (Appendix A: Q. 39, 40)

"At the present time, what are your spouse's career plans"  
"What would you like your spouse's career plans to be"

The following presents the results on the three items.

TABLE 55. ATTITUDES TOWARD RETENTION

	<u>Very satis/ satis.</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Dissat/ very dis.</u>
Feeling toward making the Army a career	71%	19%	10%
<u>Specific Career Plans</u>		<u>Soldier</u>	<u>Respondent</u>
Stay in the Army until retirement		64%	66%
Stay in the Army beyond present obligation but not necessarily until retirement	17		17
Leave the Army <u>upon completion</u> of present obligation	15		12
Leave the Army <u>before completion</u> of present obligation	5		6

It is apparent that most respondents favor making the Army a career (71%) and staying until retirement (66%). Moreover, these results show great consistency between the spouse's desires and her perception of the soldier's plans. In both cases, close to two-thirds plan to remain in the Army until retirement, 17% beyond current obligation, 15% favor completing current obligation and only a tiny minority want to leave before this obligation is completed.

As might be expected, the correlations among these three items are strong.

TABLE 56. INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG ATTITUDE TOWARD ARMY CAREER AND CAREER PLANS

	Army as career	Soldier's plans	Respondent's desires
Army as a career	--	.51	.62
Soldier's career plans	.51	--	.80
Respondent's career desires	.62	.80	--

The extremely high correlation between soldiers' and respondents' career aspirations ( $r=.80$ ) may be due to any one of several factors: respondents projecting their own preferences to the soldiers; respondents desiring to agree with presumed plans of soldiers; or true agreement between the two sets of aspirations. These data are consistent with other studies showing strong agreement between soldier and spouse with regard to career plans.

The correlation between the general question on spouse's feelings if the soldier made the Army a career and specific career plans is .51 for the soldier and .62 for the spouse. These are strong associations but the figures suggest that spouse's feelings about the Army as a career and soldier's career plans are not identical.

There are many factors that can contribute to spouses' attitudes toward retention, i.e., making the Army a career. The correlations below show the relationship between making the Army a career and a number of factors relating to military life which were discussed earlier. The item on making the Army a career is used as the outcome variable since it reflects a more general attitude than the specific career questions. The correlations are presented in descending order of magnitude.

TABLE 57. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDINAL AND AFFECTIVE VARIABLES AND THE ARMY AS A CAREER

<u>Correlation</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>
Army as a way of life	.68
Family support score	.40
Army stress score	.34
Army-family interaction score	.34
Medical components score	.26
Relocation support score	.24
Child care score	.22
Depression	-.19
Life domain problems	-.16
Spouses get special treatment	-.05
Army responsible for solving problems	-.06

These factors have been divided into several groups which show different magnitudes of association with retention. At the top,

general feelings about the Army as a way of life has a very powerful correlation with attitudes toward the Army as a career ( $r=.68$ ). Following this are three scores reflecting feelings about different aspects of Army life: perception of Army concern for spouses and families; stress; and interaction between Army and family. These factors show strong associations with retention ( $r$ 's range from .40 to .34). Satisfaction with specific Army programs and services (medical care, relocation support, and child care) have a moderate impact on the Army as a career. Depression and problems which are not necessarily related to military life manifest a somewhat weaker influence on retention and, finally, the two items involving Army treatment of and responsibility for deployed soldiers families are not significantly related to Army career attitudes.

The results suggest that overall perception of the Army, especially in relation to families, has a more significant effect on attitudes toward the Army as a career than do opinions about specific programs and services. The most general perception, the Army as a way of life, has the strongest impact. Finally, it is not surprising that stress and problems related to military life have a greater effect on Army career attitudes than do general affect and life domain problems.

Earlier, in the section on stress, we observed that over one-third of the respondents considered the possibility of involuntary release from the Army a serious source of stress. A reasonable hypothesis is that perception of this problem is a function of career aspirations for the soldier, i.e., that spouses who want the soldiers to stay in the Army are more likely than others to find downsizing a source of stress. This is, in fact, the case as the figures below indicate.

TABLE 58. CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND DOWNSIZING STRESS

<u>Downsizing Stress</u>	<u>Career Aspirations</u>			
	<u>Stay til retirement</u>	<u>Stay beyond obligation</u>	<u>Complete obligation</u>	<u>Leave before oblig</u>
Slight/not a problem	38%	44%	63%	65%
Moderate	20	26	14	16
Very serious/serious	42	30	22	20

There is a clear linear association between the two factors. Respondents who want their spouses to remain in the Army until retirement are much more likely to feel stress about involuntary separation than those who would like to leave sooner (42% compared to 20% at the extremes), strongly supporting the hypothesis stated above. It is perhaps ironic that the spouses who favor an Army career and probably like military life are now most likely to experience stress as a result of new Army policy.

## THE INFLUENCE OF RANK

Thus far, we have described attitudes of Army spouses in general. However, there is a very important factor, rank or pay grade, that may affect these attitudes as well as behaviors. The questionnaire asks each respondent to identify spouse's rank, listing nine enlisted categories, five warrant officer grades and seven commissioned officer ranks. We have combined these into five categories as follows:

(Appendix A: Q. 34)

TABLE 59. RANK OF SOLDIERS

<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>(Rank)</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
1. E1-E4	(PV1, PV2, PFC, CPL/SPC)	30%
2. E5-E9	(SGT, SSG, SFC, MSG/1SG, SGM/CSM)	50
3. W1-W4	(WO1, CW2, CW3, CW4, MW4)	3
4. O1-O3	(2LT, 1LT, CPT)	9
5. O4-O7	(MAJ, LTC, COL, GEN)	8

It should be noted that these are **weighted** frequencies reflecting the rank structure of the Army. Actual response rates are relatively higher for the senior, as compared to the junior, ranks. In the analysis below, we will use pay grades as an indicator of rank.

### The Demographics of Rank

Before analyzing the effect of rank on attitudes, we should examine some of the demographic factors that tend to be associated with rank. Seniority (length of time in service) is very likely to affect rank - senior NCOs and senior officers usually have served longer than their junior colleagues (both enlisted and officers). Similarly, they are likely to be older, married longer, and possibly, better educated. These characteristics apply to soldiers' spouses as well. The figures below show the correlations between rank and four demographic variables. (Appendix A: Q. 35, 51, 54, 50)

TABLE 60. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN RANK AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

<u>Correlation</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>
Soldier's Years of Service	.46
Age of spouse	.48
Years married	.40
Education of spouse	.45

The correlations indicate that the higher the rank, the longer the years of service and of marriage and the older and better educated the spouse. These associations are all fairly strong ( $r$ 's = .40 to .48).

Overall, there is tendency for senior rank spouses to express greater satisfaction with the Army as a way of life than do their junior counterparts. The correlation between rank and satisfaction is .17, a modest association, but significant at the

.0001 level. However, the table below presents a clearer picture of the relationship between these two variables, showing the proportion who are satisfied or dissatisfied with Army life for each rank category. (Appendix A: Q. 114)

TABLE 61. RANK AND SATISFACTION WITH THE ARMY AS A WAY OF LIFE

<u>Army Life</u>	<u>Rank</u>				
	<u>E1-E4</u>	<u>E5-E9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>01-03</u>	<u>04+</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	50%	66%	74%	72%	79%
Neutral	27	23	17	17	13
Dissatisfied/ very dissat	.23	11	9	11	8

Among the enlisted, satisfaction rises with rank; the junior officer level (01-03) shows a very slight decrease in satisfaction which then rises again among senior officers' spouses. The single largest increase in satisfaction (and decrease in dissatisfaction) is observed between the junior and senior enlisted ranks (columns 1 and 2 above).

These results refer to differences in overall satisfaction among the various rank or pay grade categories. In the next sections, we will observe variation among ranks on a variety of attitudes, affect, retention preferences, and utilization of Army programs and facilities.

### 1. Perception of Army Attitudes

The survey includes a number of items relating to perceptions of Army concern for families as well as spouses' interaction with the Army and Army agencies. Several scores have been constructed to measure these attitudes. The first, a family support score includes the following: respect Army shows wives; concern for families by Army, by unit, by leaders in high places, by unit officers, by unit NCOs; and unit leaders' attitude toward family programs, activities, and welfare. (See section on Quality of Life.) The second score, titled Army-family interaction, consists of believing that one is informed about the Army, feeling comfortable with Army agencies and with the Army medical system, and perceiving oneself as treated with respect by Army employees. The third score reflects the belief that the Army is responsible for giving special treatment to and solving all problems of spouses of deployed soldiers. (These scores are described in the section on Stresses of Army Life.)

The table below shows the correlation between rank and each of these three scores.

TABLE 62. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN RANK AND ARMY-FAMILY VARIABLES

<u>Score</u>	<u>Correlation Coefficient</u>
Family support	.18
Army-family interaction	.15
Army responsibility for spouses	-.09

These figures indicate that the higher the rank, the more likely the spouses will have a favorable view of Army and unit support as well as feeling comfortable and informed. In the case of Army responsibility, the negative correlation shows that **lower** rank spouses are more likely than higher rank to feel the Army is responsible for spouses of deployed soldiers. However, we must emphasize that these correlations, while statistically significant, reflect only minor (e.g., -.09) to modest associations (.18) between rank and these scores.

## 2. Spouse Stress and Adjustment

Another series of scores is designed to measure stress and coping in general as well as during and after ODS.

(Appendix A: Q. 107A1-A6 17A1-A15, Q23A1-A7)

The score entitled "stress" is based on several items, indicating on a five point scale, the degree of severity of each of the following problems: coping with day to day stress; demands Army makes of families; getting along when spouse is away; opportunities to achieve personal goals; possibility of combat; and separation from own family. These items represent stressors associated with military life. In an earlier section, we observed that the majority of spouses experienced relatively few severe problems, i.e., 82% had stress scores reflecting some, slight, or no problems.

ODS represented a period of special stress produced by deployment of the soldier, reunion of the family and the soldier after deployment, and longer work hours among non-deployed soldiers. A number of questions were combined into scores reflecting adjustment under each condition.

The first score consists of a series of six items asking how the respondent managed while the soldier spouse was deployed **during** ODS (these questions applied **only** to spouses of deployed soldiers): getting household tasks done; obtaining needed transportation; shopping; taking care of own health; handling loneliness; and maintaining safety and security.

A second group of items relates to adjustment **after** the deployed soldier's return: adjusting to new household routines; working at paid job; making household decisions; family finances; marital intimacy; meeting children's expectations; and disciplining children.

The results for the total sample show that, during ODS, the great majority (82%) of spouses adjusted either well or very well,

scoring in the upper half of the range of scores. After the deployed soldiers' return, however, the proportion who managed well or very well declined to 65%. This suggests that certain problems may develop at the time of reunion, a subject that will be addressed more intensively in the section focusing on ODS.

In cases where the soldier did not deploy, spouses were asked how they managed in view of the longer work hours due to ODS. The same six items listed for deployment coping are included here. Once again, the great majority of respondents (78%) said that they managed well or very well during this period.

(Appendix A: Q. 22A2-A16)

Finally, the survey includes a series of questions relating to affect or general well being. (Appendix A: Q. 112A1-A7)

Respondents indicate how often during the last week (ranging from none to seven days) have they experienced the following symptoms of depression: couldn't get going; felt sad; had trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep; felt everything was an effort; felt lonely; couldn't shake the blues; and had trouble keeping mind on what you were doing. Scores range from zero (no signs of depression) through a high of 49, i.e., each symptom was experienced every day of the last week. The findings indicate that, among all spouses, over 43% score between 0 and 3, reflecting very low depression; twenty-eight percent score between 4 and 10, suggesting some depression; 19% showed fairly negative affect (score 11-26) and 10% score over 27, reflecting serious depression. However, most of this last group does not fall into the highly depressed category, scoring over 40. This distribution suggests that many spouses experience some depression but that very few are extremely depressed.

The section above describes stress, coping, and affect for the entire sample of spouses. The figures which follow indicate the association between rank and each of these variables as measured by scores: stress; adjustment during deployment; adjustment after reunion; adjustment to long hours among the non-deployed; and depression.

TABLE 63. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN RANK AND STRESS, COPING, AND AFFECT

Score	Correlation Coefficient
Stress	.15
Adjustment during deployment	.17
Adjustment during reunion	.14
Adjustment to longer hours	.21
Depression	-.23

In all cases, stress, problems adjustment and affect are related to rank in a consistent direction, i.e., higher rank spouses tend to experience less stress, adjust better to all conditions related to ODS, and manifest lower depression. However, it should be noted that, although significant, these are for the most part modest-to-moderate correlations. The strongest relationship is the negative correlation between rank and depressive symptoms; the lower the rank, the more likely the spouse is to have a high depressive affect score. We should

mention again that rank and age are correlated and that younger women (e.g., with pre-school children) tend to be the group most vulnerable to depression. This may partially explain the association between rank and depression.

### 3. Interrelationships among these Scores

All the variables relating to perceptions of Army attitudes, stress, and adjustment show at least some relationship to rank. In each case, higher rank is associated with more favorable perceptions, lower stress and depression, and better adjustment to separation, reunion, and longer hours related to ODS. It is possible that these variables represent sets or constellations of related factors, which in turn, are associated with rank or pay grades.

#### a) Perception of Army Attitudes toward Families

The table below presents the intercorrelations among the three scores reflecting perception of Army attitudes: family support, Army-family interaction and Army's responsibility for spouses; the letters "ns" indicate that the correlation is not statistically significant.

TABLE 64. INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG ARMY-FAMILY VARIABLES

	Fam sup	Army-fam	Army resp
Family support	--.37	.03	ns
Army-family interaction	.37	--.02	ns
Army responsibility	.03 ns	.02 ns	--

We see that perceptions of family support and ease in dealing with the Army and its agencies are strongly associated with each other. The third factor, feeling the Army is responsible for problems and special treatment of deployed soldiers' spouses, shows little relationship to the other variables.

#### b) Stress and Adjustment

The second group of scores, as described above, relate to general stressors of military life, ability to manage under different ODS conditions and feelings of depression. The matrix below shows the relationships among these variables. Correlations between deployment adjustment and adjustment to longer hours are omitted since they refer to different sub-groups (deployed and non-deployed).

TABLE 65. INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG STRESS, ADJUSTMENT, AND AFFECT

	Stress	Deploy	Reunion	Hours	Depress.
Army stress	--	.41	.23	.40	-.43
Adjustment-deployment	.41	--	.25	--	-.28
Adjustment-reunion	.23	.25	--	--	-.26
Adjustment-longer hrs	.40	--	--	--	-.27
Depression	-.43	-.28	-.26	-.27	--

These data reveal moderate-to-strong interrelationships among these variables. Army stress and affect (depression) are strongly correlated ( $r=-.43$ ); both are related to adjustment during deployment separation and to longer hours. The correlations between reunion adjustment and both stress and depression are not as powerful but still considerable ( $r's = .23$  and  $-.26$ , respectively).

The question arises whether Army spouses cluster into groups which are "adjusted" (i.e. manage well, suffer little stress and depression) and those which are not adjusted. And are these two groups or types differentially located among the soldier ranks?

We observed in the previous section, that the scores relating to perception of Army attitudes, stress, depression, and coping are interrelated, some of them quite strongly. The only exception is the two-item score dealing with Army responsibility toward spouses of deployed soldiers which is not significantly related to the other "perception of Army" variables. In order to identify different groups of spouses in terms of total adjustment, we have combined seven scores (omitting the Army responsibility score): perceptions of family support; Army-family interaction; stress related to military life; coping during deployment; coping after reunion; adjustment to longer hours among non-deployed soldiers; depression. These seven variables have been recoded so that a low score is always unfavorable (e.g., indicates poor coping, high stress, multiple problems and depression) while a high score reflects effective coping, low stress, fewer life domain problems, and low depression. The scores have been combined into a single variable, called "general adjustment" with a range of values from 13 (very poor adjustment) through 221 (very good adjustment). The distribution is divided into approximately four equal score categories as shown below:

TABLE 66. TOTAL ADJUSTMENT OF SPOUSES

<u>Total Adjustment Score</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Very good (169 - 221)	7%
Good (117 - 168)	57
Poor ( 65 - 116)	33
Very poor ( 13 - 64)	3

There are relatively few respondents who fall into either the very poorly adjusted or the very well adjusted categories. The single largest group of spouses is moderately positive on overall adjustment based on the seven constituent scores. Almost two-thirds of the respondents fall into the positive half of the scores.

We can now examine rank differences in terms of total adjustment as indicated by the combined score described above. The table below presents these findings.

TABLE 67. RANK AND GENERAL ADJUSTMENT OF SPOUSES

<u>General Adjustment</u>	<u>Rank</u>				
	<u>E1-E4</u>	<u>E5-E9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>O1-O3</u>	<u>O4+</u>
Very/moderately good	49%	69%	77%	77%	74%
Moderately/very poor	51	31	23	23	26

These figures combine the "very" and "moderately" adjusted categories. The major finding is the difference among the non-officer ranks. The junior enlisted spouses are most likely to manifest poor adjustment while the proportion who are well adjusted rises sharply for senior enlisted and continues to rise among warrant officers' spouses. There is little or no further change among officers' spouses in the proportion who are well adjusted. We can conclude that, at least among the enlisted, rank has a fairly strong effect on overall adjustment among spouses.

These data have implications for Army intervention strategies in terms of spouse support. Since junior spouses apparently cope and adjust less effectively than other spouses, they should be targeted for support/help intervention by Army programs.

#### 4. Medical and Dental Care

Satisfaction with medical care makes a significant contribution to overall satisfaction with Army life ( $r=.33$ ). Dental care also has an impact on general satisfaction, although not as strong ( $r=.24$ ). It is clear that medical and dental programs are important to the Army spouse. This section examines whether there are any rank differences in satisfaction with these programs.

The survey includes three basic questions on satisfaction with quality of medical care; availability of medical care; and Champus. The correlation between each of these factors and rank is negligible, ranging from  $r$ 's of .01 to -.05. Similarly, the correlations between rank and quality and availability of dental care are very slight; only the Delta Dental program, used by a minority of spouses, shows some association with rank -  $r=.10$  - but this is a very modest association.

(Appendix A: Q. 77A1-A2, 78A1-A17, 78A1-A2, 79, 80)

If we compare ranks in terms of satisfaction with different aspects of medical care, in most cases there is no clear pattern of association. As indicated above, the Delta Dental Plan shows some association with rank: there is a linear rise in satisfaction from 42% among the E1-E4 group to 59% among senior officers. Again, it should be emphasized that this program is not widely used; only 41% of spouses have used it in the last three years. The figures on satisfaction are based on the minority of 41% who have used the program.

A series of items in the survey relates to satisfaction with different aspects of medical care, e.g., attitudes of doctors, time spent waiting for appointment, hours of operations, access to specialty care, etc. The seventeen components of medical care are summed up into a single score. The correlation between rank and this score is not statistically significant,  $r=.03$ . If we divide the ranks into satisfied and dissatisfied, we find the following distribution, indicating that there are virtually no rank differences in attitudes toward medical care.

TABLE 68. RANK AND SATISFACTION WITH MEDICAL CARE

<u>Medical care component score</u>	<u>Rank</u>				
	<u>E1-4</u>	<u>E5-9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>O1-3</u>	<u>O4+</u>
Very satisfied/ satisfied	60%	58%	60%	61%	63%
Dissatisfied/very dissatisfied	40	42	40	39	37

Although we have found very few and only minor rank differences in attitudes toward medical and dental care, this fact is significant, particularly with regard to medical care. The medical program is an important contributor to overall satisfaction with Army life as well as a major factor in retention. We recall that 36% of the spouses rated medical care as the first, second, or third most important reason for staying in the Army. The fact that rank is **not** a factor in the perceptions of medical care suggests that improvement be directed toward service for all families rather than toward particular target populations.

### 5. Employment

We observed earlier that close to half of Army spouses are employed either full time or part time while one-fifth do not want to work for various reasons. There is little difference in terms of overall satisfaction between the employed and the non-employed who do not want to work. However, the unemployed who want to work do manifest lower general satisfaction. The great majority of spouses work in traditional female occupations; most are satisfied with their work, but job satisfaction is highest among spouses who hold professional or managerial jobs.

In this section, we will analyze the relationship between rank and a series of employment-related factors. The following tables indicate employment status and type of occupations, by rank, of the respondents in the survey. (Appendix A: Q. 95, 96)

TABLE 69.

RANK AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF SPOUSES

<u>Employment Status</u>	<u>Rank</u>				
	<u>E1-E4</u>	<u>E5-E9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>01-03</u>	<u>04+</u>
Working full time	20%	35%	35%	30%	30%
Working part time	13	17	20	15	18
Not-emp; looking for work	18	14	9	10	6
Not-emp; would like to work	28	17	12	13	13
Not-emp; do not want to work now	20	17	24	31	33

TABLE 70.

RANK AND OCCUPATION OF SPOUSES

Occupation

Blue collar	38%	31%	18%	10%	7%
White collar	46	42	44	25	24
Managerial/prof.	16	27	38	64	69

The first set of figures can be summed up as follows: employment is highest among senior enlisted and warrant officers' spouses (52% and 55% are working either full time or part time). Officers' spouses are most likely to be out of the labor force, i.e., do not want to work, while junior enlisted spouses are the single largest unemployed group as 46% are either job-hunting or would like to work.

There is a clear relationship between rank and type of occupation. Junior enlisted spouses are most likely to be in blue collar occupations (38%) and least likely to hold professional or managerial jobs (16%). On the other hand, only 7% of senior officers' spouse have blue collar jobs while over two-thirds are in managerial or professional occupations. White collar work (sales, secretarial) represents the most frequent type of occupation among all enlisted and warrant officers' spouses but declines sharply for officers' spouses.

There are also statistically significant correlations between rank and several other employment-related factors. As rank rises, the number of weeks worked in the previous year (among the employed) also rises ( $r=.11$ ). This is a weak association but the relationship between rank and earnings is considerably stronger ( $r=.26$ ), indicating that the higher the rank, the greater the spouses' earnings. The relationship between rank and earnings maybe at least partially responsible for the data on adequacy of income. Over two-fifths of junior enlisted spouses find their income either inadequate or very inadequate; this declines in a linear fashion to a low of 8% among senior officers' spouses. Conversely, only about one-quarter of the lowest ranks find their incomes adequate/very adequate compared to 82% in the senior officer group. Of course, it should be pointed out that this refers to total family income. Not only do spouses' earnings relate to rank, but, clearly,

soldiers' pay also increases with rank. Consequently, the lower rank family earns less from both sources, soldier and spouse.

Finally, a score computed on the basis of a series of job components (e.g., salary, challenge, use of skills, etc.) shows a modest association with rank ( $r=.17$ ); higher rank spouses are more likely to be satisfied with various aspect of their jobs. In this case, we divide the job satisfaction scores into four categories and examine rank differences. (Appendix A: Q. 102A2-A13)

TABLE 71. RANK AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG SPOUSES

<u>Job Satisfaction</u>	<u>Rank</u>				
	<u>E1-E4</u>	<u>E5-E9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>01-04</u>	<u>04+</u>
Very satisfied	17%	31%	32%	36%	43%
Satisfied	63	55	58	55	50
Dissatisfied	18	13	10	9	7
Very dissatisfied	2	1	<1	<1	<1

These data show the following: a) most spouses are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs (measured through a score of satisfaction/dissatisfaction on a series of job components); b) rank is associated with high satisfaction as the proportion who are **very** satisfied increases from 17% among junior enlisted spouses to 43% among senior officer spouses. c) on the other hand, dissatisfaction is highest among lower ranks but very few are very dissatisfied, regardless of rank.

The results dealing with rank and employment of spouses can be summed up briefly as follows:

1. Senior enlisted and warrant officers' spouses are most likely to be employed while junior enlisted spouses are least likely to be working.
2. The higher the soldier's rank, the more likely the employed spouse will be employed for longer periods during a year, have higher earnings and occupy a job in the professional or managerial category.
3. The higher the rank, the greater the proportion of spouses who are satisfied with their jobs and who find their family income adequate.
4. While rank has important effects on spouse employment related variables, it should be pointed out that rank is associated with a series of other factors, such as age, education, and work experience. The junior enlisted spouse, if employed, is apt to hold a lower level, poorer-paying job which is less satisfactory than others. Because of youth, inexperience, and possibly lower educational achievement, she may find it more difficult than her older counterparts to obtain a job. Finally, her lower earnings as well as the low pay grade of the soldier spouse both contribute to her assessment that family income is inadequate.

## 6. Housing and Relocation

Generally, housing satisfaction contributes moderately to overall satisfaction with Army life ( $r=.22$ ). In this section, we will examine whether there are any rank differences with regard to housing. (Appendix A: Q. 58, 60)

The survey reveals some important rank differences in terms of type of housing. The majority of junior enlisted live in rented housing, off post (56%); 28% live on post and only a tiny proportion own their homes. Senior enlisted are most likely to live on-post (44%), followed by 26% owning houses, and 25% renting off post. Most warrant officers (a very small group) either own homes (41%) or live on post (33%). Among the officers, about one-third live on post. Senior officers are the relatively the most frequent homeowners (45%) compared to 29% of the junior officers while the latter are more likely than their senior counterparts to rent (32% compared to 20%).

The table below shows the rank differences in terms of satisfaction with housing.

TABLE 72. RANK AND SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING

<u>Housing Satisfaction</u>	<u>Rank</u>				
	<u>E1-E4</u>	<u>E5-E9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>01-03</u>	<u>04+</u>
Very satisfied, satisfied	53%	65%	75%	74%	78%
Neutral	27	19	13	15	12
Dissatisfied, very dissatisfied	19	16	12	10	10

The most significant finding is that, in general, the majority of spouses are satisfied or very satisfied with their current housing regardless of rank. However, satisfaction is highest among senior officers' spouses and least among junior enlisted, indicating that it is related to rank. This difference in satisfaction can be attributed to type of housing; the groups that are homeowners (warrant officers and senior officers) are also the most likely to be satisfied with their housing. Earlier analysis has shown that homeowners tend to be more positive about their housing than are renters of any type of housing.

Army life is characterized by frequent moves. Earlier, the data revealed that there is no association between number of PCS moves and satisfaction with the Army as a way of life. However, a score based on satisfaction with relocation services strongly affected overall satisfaction among spouses; however, only a minority had used these services. (Appendix A: Q. 69, 71A1-A6)

If we examine rank differences, we find that the higher the rank, the greater the number of PCS moves in the last three years. Of course, this relationship may be due to the fact that some junior

enlisted personnel have not been in the Army long enough to have moved frequently.

Relocation support is measured through a series of six items: pre-move destination information; lending closet; installation, unit and overseas orientations; post guest house temporary lodging. Respondents are asked: a) did they use each service during the last PCS move, and b) if used, how satisfied were they with the services. In terms of use, large percentages of spouses did not use these services; overall **non-use** ranges from a low of 33% for destination information to a high of 75% for overseas orientation. It is not clear whether non-use is due to unavailability, lack of knowledge or choice. For most services, usage **decreases** as rank rises (pre-destination information is the only exception to this pattern). These data suggest that senior rank spouses, with more experience in moving, may not need relocation services.

A relocation support score based on the six items described above sums up satisfaction among users. The correlation between rank and this score is .14, indicating a very modest association between rank and satisfaction with relocation support. A clearer picture of this relationship can be seen in the figures below comparing ranks in terms of satisfaction with relocation support. Again, we emphasize that the Relocation Support score refers **only** to the minority who have used these services.

TABLE 73. RANK AND SATISFACTION WITH RELOCATION SUPPORT  
Rank

<u>Relocation Sup Score</u>	<u>E1-E4</u>	<u>E5-E9</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>01-03</u>	<u>04+</u>
Very satisfied, satisfied	45%	63%	62%	63%	71%
Dissatisfied, very dissatisfied	55	37	38	37	29

Here we observe an association with rank; however, the single greatest increase is between junior and senior enlisted spouses (+18% satisfied); after that, the percentages do not change until a further increase among senior officers' spouses (+8%). A final question relating to relocation asks how pre-destination information was provided for a PCS move: ACS; welcome packet; sponsor letter; individual counseling; group r the entire sample, only minorities ranging from 1% (individual counseling) to 33% (welcome packet) received any of these services. If we compare ranks, services decline as rank rises with one exception - senior enlisted are most likely to receive a sponsor letter (47%) compared to 7% of junior enlisted, 5% of warrant officers and about 20% for officers.

In summary, there are some rank differences relative to relocation services: a) senior spouses are less likely to use most of them, but b) among users, senior spouses are more likely to be satisfied. The major finding, however, relates to non-use. Large groups in each rank do **not** use any of the services nor do they receive pre-move information about their new destination.

## **7. Utilization of Army Services and Facilities**

The survey includes a large number of items relating to use of different services and facilities (e.g., Red Cross, Housing Referral Offices, commissary, PX, ACS programs, recreational facilities). Since nearly fifty services are listed, we will summarize the major findings on differential usage by rank. It should be noted that many of these programs/services are used by relatively few spouses in general; however, we can compare relative use among ranks. The following section lists programs in terms of the patterns of usage among ranks.  
(Appendix A: Q. 72A1-A20, 73A1-A13, 75A1-A7, 76A1-A7)

### **Little or no variation in use among ranks:**

Commissary  
Post Exchange  
Post cafeterias  
Social work services  
Chaplain's Family Life Center  
Relocation counseling and information  
English as a Second Language  
Exceptional Family Member Program  
Family Member Employment Assistance Program

### **Increased use among junior ranks:**

Red Cross  
Army Education Center  
Family Assistance Center  
Army Emergency Relief  
Housing referral - on and off post  
Outreach Program  
Foster child care  
Fast food restaurants on post  
Women, Infants' and Children's Program

### **Increased use among senior ranks:**

Chaplain's ministry  
Chaplain's religious services  
Legal services

### **Highest use among senior enlisted:**

Recreation and sports programs  
(e.g., library, recreation center, golf, auto crafts,  
arts and crafts, outdoor recreation, movies, theater,  
bowling, clubs, youth activities, and fitness  
centers)

## **8. Retention**

We saw earlier that close to two-thirds of the respondents want the soldier to stay in the Army until retirement; moreover, most spouses attribute the same aspirations to the soldier. Only very small minorities favor leaving the Army before the present obligation is completed. (Appendix A: Q. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20)

The tables below present these data separating rank categories. The first table shows the spouse's preference; the second shows the soldier's preference, as stated by the spouse.

The third table presents data on a related question: how would the spouse feel if the soldier made the Army a career?

TABLE 74. RANK AND RETENTION PREFERENCE AMONG SPOUSES

Spouse Preference	Rank				
	E1-E4	E5-E9	WO	01-03	04+
Stay until retirement	32%	82%	86%	64%	88%
Stay beyond obligation	34	8	7	21	3
Complete obligation	24	5	4	12	7
Leave before completion	10	4	3	4	2

TABLE 75. RANK AND RETENTION PREFERENCE AMONG SOLDIERS

Soldier Preference

Stay until retirement	24%	81%	87%	67%	92%
Stay beyond obligation	33	9	8	20	3
Complete obligation	36	5	4	10	5
Leave before completion	7	4	1	3	--

TABLE 76. RANK AND SPOUSE ATTITUDE TOWARD MAKING THE ARMY A CAREER

Army as a Career

Very satisfied/satisfied	55%	78%	83%	71%	83%
Neutral	27	15	13	18	13
Dissatisfied/very dissatisfied	18	7	4	12	4

Attitudes toward retention are apparently associated with both rank and seniority. Junior enlisted spouses are least likely to want soldiers to stay until retirement; the proportion who favor staying until retirement rises dramatically for senior enlisted and warrant officers, declines among junior commissioned officers, and reaches a high for senior officers. Although relatively few want the soldiers to leave before completing the present obligation, the same pattern holds. Junior enlisted spouses are clearly most negative about retention; junior officer spouses are the second most negative but much more favorable than their enlisted counterparts. Finally, soldiers' preferences, as reflected in spouses' responses, are highly consistent with their own, showing the same pattern of association with rank and seniority.

It should be pointed out, of course, that senior rank soldiers (both among enlisted and officers) usually have invested more time in the Army than have junior personnel. Thus, staying until

retirement is likely to be a realistic aspiration for senior rank spouses.

The final table also relates to retention but the question is phrased somewhat differently. Respondents are asked how they would feel if the soldier made the Army a career. Again, the relationship with rank and seniority is maintained as junior enlisted spouses are least likely to be satisfied with a career in the Army; the satisfied group increases sharply for senior enlisted, falls somewhat for junior officers and rises again among the senior commissioned ranks. However, despite these differences, it should be emphasized that the majority in each rank category favor making the Army a career.

The data described in this section indicate that most spouses, regardless of rank, would like the soldiers to stay in the Army, either until retirement or for some indefinite period; they do not want the soldiers to leave the Army soon. At the time of this survey, plans to downsize the Army produced speculation that some soldiers might be forced to leave before they chose to. The survey includes one question asking whether the possibility of involuntary release represents a problem. The results, by rank, follow. (Appendix A: Q. 107A7)

TABLE 77. RANK AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATION FROM THE ARMY

Extent of Problem	Rank				
	E1-E4	E5-9	WO	01-03	04+
No/slight problem	46%	40%	50%	51%	51%
Moderate problem	21	20	19	21	19
Serious/very serious problem	33	41	31	28	30

Most of the rank differences are relatively small. Senior enlisted (E5-9) are most likely to find this a serious problem; this may be due to the fact that, although they have invested considerable time in the Army, they fear retirement could be inadequate. Officers, on the other hand, may feel better equipped for civilian employment or, in the case of senior officers, are likely to qualify for retirement with a relatively good pension. It should be noted that soldiers who leave the Army before twenty years of service do not receive retirement pay.

In summary, we find most spouses, regardless of rank, have positive attitudes toward retention and attribute the same attitudes to the soldier. Attitudes toward retention also grow more favorable with seniority both within the enlisted and the officer ranks. Finally, there are relatively minor rank differences with regard to involuntary separation with about 50-60% finding this at least a moderate problem.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The SAF 1991 data indicate that spouses' general perceptions of the Army have greater impact on feelings of satisfaction with Army life and with the Army as a career than do specific programs, policies, and conditions of military life. Factors such as Army concern for families, feelings of ease in dealing with Army agencies and personnel, and respect for spouses and families are crucial in contributing to overall satisfaction with

the Army as a way of life. Somehow the Army must communicate to spouses that it cares about them; this is an intangible but can be implemented through programs which provide information, orientation and, if possible, mentoring to spouses.

2. Specific programs and policies also affect general satisfaction but to a lesser degree. Medical care is apparently the single most important program for families and spouses. While most rate overall medical care as satisfactory, there are some components that clearly need improvement. The Army would do well to direct its attention to factors such as waiting time (for appointment, for doctors, for pharmacy), access to specialty care and to information by telephone.

3. With regard to other programs, a major finding of the survey is the relative lack of use among spouses. It is not always clear if this is due to lack of knowledge or dissatisfaction with the program. However, in some cases, weaknesses are apparent.

a) Child care data suggest a need for more flexible easily-available facilities for short-term "drop-in" care. The Army child care centers and licensed homes apparently do not provide this type of care; parents rely more on casual babysitting than on Army facilities.

b) The Civilian Personnel Office is used relatively little although many non-employed spouses are job-hunting or would like to work. Qualitative data has revealed widespread dissatisfaction with the CPO among spouses, a problem that should be addressed by the Army.

c) The material on recreational programs highlights the importance of certain facilities. For example, the library is used most and rated as important by the largest number of spouses. The Army might want to concentrate limited resources on such programs that are particularly important to the family.

4. In terms of problems, stress and coping, either in general or during ODS, the outstanding result is the effective adjustment of most spouses. There is some evidence that this is related to age, rank, and experience with the Army; thus, the Army should target its support efforts on the most vulnerable groups - the young, junior rank spouse with limited experience in military life.

5. During ODS, the Family Support Group clearly emerged as the most effective Army support program for spouses. Its activity and participation by spouses increased during this period and it was evaluated as effective in a number of areas. Furthermore, it was the **only** Army program that successfully provided information about the soldier and the war to a significant number of spouses. These data suggest that FSGs on the unit level should be encouraged.

6. With regard to retention, the chief reasons for wanting the soldier to remain in the Army involve retirement benefits, medical care, and security and stability. Recent development such as downsizing have created uncertainty and anxiety about these benefits.

Downsizing has become a serious source of stress, particularly to those spouses who favor the Army as a career. The Army needs to provide clear and unambiguous information to soldiers and spouses regarding involuntary separation from the Army; while it will not solve the problem of downsizing, it might mitigate some of the anxiety as well as the feeling that the Army simply does not care.